The
Squealer ©

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Midwest Music Collective

Cake Magazine's Deneen Gannon

You Owe Me Liquor Money

Film Gourmet

If You're A Writer, Where's Your Book?

Here Comes The Neighborhood

Claire O. Writes A Letter

Everybody's Damn Lists For '94

Scrapping

Panhandling

A History Lesson With Mike Watt

Letters

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The Squealer is published about every six weeks. This particular issue is printed on 30# newsprint and all that eco-friendly stuff like recycled paper, stamps licked by the dog, and free cat hair in every issue.As far as I can tell we've got about 13, maybe 15,000 of these things lying around the Midwest, and beyond. So if you find it else where, let us know. Distribution is a son of a bitch, lemme tell ya. Now that we're big business, don't even think about using any of this here stuff without our express written consent or else we'll get even. Really. We have a lawyer.

Gentle reader: What follows is our second letter from our biggest fan in Eau Claire. Ms. O. has this inimitable, endlessly entertaining, and witty writing style which editors like myself love to chew on. If she'd only contact us with a phone call we'd love to give her her own column. Something like "Ask Claire" or "New Claire Column" or some such nonsense. If anybody out there has a good idea, let us know. We need more contact with this master of wit - not only that but, we really need more women writers. We're dyin' here without that feminine touch! This letter has been edited ever so slightly for your reading pleasure.

Dear Squealer,

If only I were in a coffee shop as I write this. What I wouldn't give to be jazzed (or even speed metaled) (although certainly not New Aged) on caffeine, drawing great searing draughts of scurrilous second-hand smoke far into the alveolar catacombs of my backpedaling lungs, all the while snapping out crackling prose. 'Course writers who hang out in coffee shops tend to snap out a lot more pose than prose. Still, if I were hunched against the brick wall at Racy D'Lene' s Very Coffee Lounge (Eau Claire's Official Pleasant Cultural Surprise More Power To'em, Good Luck to the Clavicle Woman), draining a double Americano while other people twiddle their nose rings and play backgammon, I might be inspired to scale (never have a scaler when you need one) the airy echelons of literary discourse, leaving the fish of literary discourse completely skinned in its echelon regions.
But I'm not.
Nope-sirree, here I am in a hairy of fice chair snorkeling my way through a warmish cup of 100% Freeze Dried Taster's Choice Gourmet Blend ("Extra Rich and Robust," it says on the label. Methinks they can hardly be describing the brown atomic leakage I'm drinking. Rush Limbaugh, maybe.), thinking how the post holiday blues wouldn't be so bad if it weren't for Christmas being over, and won't next year be simply "bully" as they used to say when Teddy Roosevelt was more than just another face on a national monument, because after all, everyone gets a head start on life this year because in the spirit of delighting myself I offer the following advice:

~ Beware like spongy roots anyone - vegetarians and rednecks alike - who can express their most deeply held convictions in the space of a bumper sticker.

~ Never mix business with alcohol. It becomes very flammable, prone to spontaneous combustion and rampant capitalism, which it will regret in the morning when it wakes up alone in a Malaysian doll factory.

~ Don't stack oily rags in the corner of your garage. They too could spontaneously combust or stain your rake.

~ Let's all pitch in together and see what we can do about this business of people shooting at the White House. I for one promise to shoot only at my own house.

Speaking of the holidays...didja ever notice how the Clapper just keeps coming back, just like, well....I mean, aren't there *shots* for that?

And so, in closing, I am reminded of the great lyric poet Dylan Thomas, who, upon pinching his thumb in the boathouse door, said, "Cripes that smarts! Caitlin! I've pinched my bloody thumb in the door! I'm a lyric poet! One of the best! I can't be troubled by things like thumbs in doors! Have it removed!" Soon thereafter, with both the door and his thumbs gone, the poet was struck forever silent, his life's work obscured by his life' s blood, which had leaked out his thumb stumps, his lungs congealed with pneumonia caused by a chilly draft motoring through the doorlessway. 'Least that's what it says in my version of Encarta ' 95

Give that nice Andy Grund a little scratch under the chin, right where he likes it.

Thoroughly,
Claire O.

P.S. Golly I love my Buck Owens box set.That darn Eddie Vedder, he's cute in a pseudo-troubled, TicketMaster, self centered angsty sorta way, but he can't hold a Candlebox to ol' Buck. Eddie has angst. Buck has twangst. There's a big ol' sequined difference.

Dear Squealer,

I may have located your Fred Sanford-style, sweetheart-seducing salvage mobile. The color is right (dusty pomegranate) and vintage correct (very old). So if you'd like to know where this broad-shouldered gal's been all your life, why, stalled in the yard behind Liquor Lyle's, of course! And by the looks of the brown field grass grown tall and twisted into its silent wheel wells, I'd wager this Lamont-Love-Lair has been at rest there since 1980, or at least since Bob Stinson was first spotted wandering wistfully along Hennepin Avenue. Now I wouldn't know if she still "runs out good," or is even for sale, but in today's 4x4 world of Ford Explorers and luxury Minivans you could probably snatch her up for a case of Ripple. Good luck.

Mike Leville,
Minneapolis
P.S., Would Aunt Esther approve of your sweetheart?

Editorial My Ass

Ah, winter... A time for reflection and resolution. I remember the good old days of punk rock, and I wonder, what happened? I wonder what would happen to your average young punk if say he (sorry gals, being male myself this has to be from a male perspective) were thrust into a Black Flag show at the Starwood back in '81. Well, obviously he'd get the snot kicked out of him. Back then we didn't take kindly to sideburn-sportin', cap-wearin' longhairs whose pants were big enough for three guys (at once). And moshing? When did that come about? Not that I liked all the projectile loogying, broken noses and stuff, but those old punks had balls. BIG balls. Big, hairy-if you-look-at-me-sideways-I'm-gonna-mess-you-up-but-GOOD-balls. That was slamming. Not *slammin'*, as in cool, but slamming, as in getting righteously beat-up by your fellow punks while the band played "Revenge". Not satisfied with just saying, "get a haircut you fuckin' hippie", but actually wrestling the guy to the ground to cut all his hair off with whatever sharp (or blunt) object that happened to be lying around. And those sideburns? No way. Not cool. 'Nuff said.

So what am I getting at? Not much I suppose. I just started thinking about this stuff after our Squealer road trip across Wisconsin. Wisconsin has all the cool things about "the old days" going for it as well as all the current "alternative" garbage that's floating around. The cool things like; Milwaukee smells worse than Manhattan when the garbage collectors are on strike during a humid summer (don't be confused - this is a cool punk-rock-type-thing); Madison, Milwaukee, Eau Claire and La Crosse all have cool clubs that stay open until 2:30 in the morning (way past your average Minnesota club bed time); and, lastly, really cheap beer. Then there are the bad things; moshing-long-hair-sideburn-sportin'-BIG-pants-still-suckin'-yo-momma's-tittie-when-I-was-out-getting-fucked-up-and-my-nose-broken-by-some-skinhead-butt-licker-at-a-Black-Flag-show-back-in-'81-or-was-it-'83?

O.K. I'm done. Had to get that off my chest. Don't get me wrong. You younger dudes are cool. Very cool. But those sideburns...yeesh. Don't be surprised if some guy with really short hair (going gray at the temples), and foaming at the mouth lunges at you with a butter knife muttering "sideburns...sideburns...side-burns." Don't be too alarmed....it'll probably be me.

As if my editorial wasn't enough, Leo decides he needs in on the action. So this little bit extra is his. At least he's not foaming at the mouth like I was. Strange, considering the fact that he was absolutely miserable on this excursion due to his girlfriend dumping him.

MADISON ACTION AND A MILWAUKEE MOMENT

We were driving to Madison, Paul Bernstein and I, when Paul asked what Madison was like, he'd never been there. I told him it was cool, there were people who had it together, but the music scene was dead. Nobody went to check out bands. I think the truth was that nobody came out to see my old band. Anyway, we got there and went directly to the recently re-opened O' Cayz Coral. Thank God!. It's probably one of the only places where I feel really comfortable. We even got in for free. Oh baby, I'm lovin' Madison. Then more, my old pal Brian Brecht's band Pachinko is about to take the stage. I didn't mention yet that my girlfriend had recently dumped me. I was a little tense.

Before we could really dig into Pachinko, Paul and I had to make a quick visit to the Chamber, which is where one goes when O'Cayz isn't an option. We walk in, also for free, and who should we see tearing down but Madison's own Tongue. Sweet sister, I just played with these boys a month before in La Crosse. Al Fortney and Co. were finished playing but it was still nice to see them again. We rapped with Ken and went back to O' Cayz.

Right before Pachinko started I ran into Jeff from Powerwagon. Boy for a guy who thought Madison had died, I was sure having a groovy time. Anyway, we hung a bit and then the walls of punk started closing in. Pachinko is the worst side of punk, just shit. Sister that's a compliment.. I was ready. I stayed on the floor for all but two cuts. Obnoxious wanna-be skinhead brats trying to slam. This really huge bearded guy with a hard hat (Wisconsin weird) & I pushed the brats so hard they fell down and then scurried away. Anyway it was a lovely evening. Madison isn't dead I guess

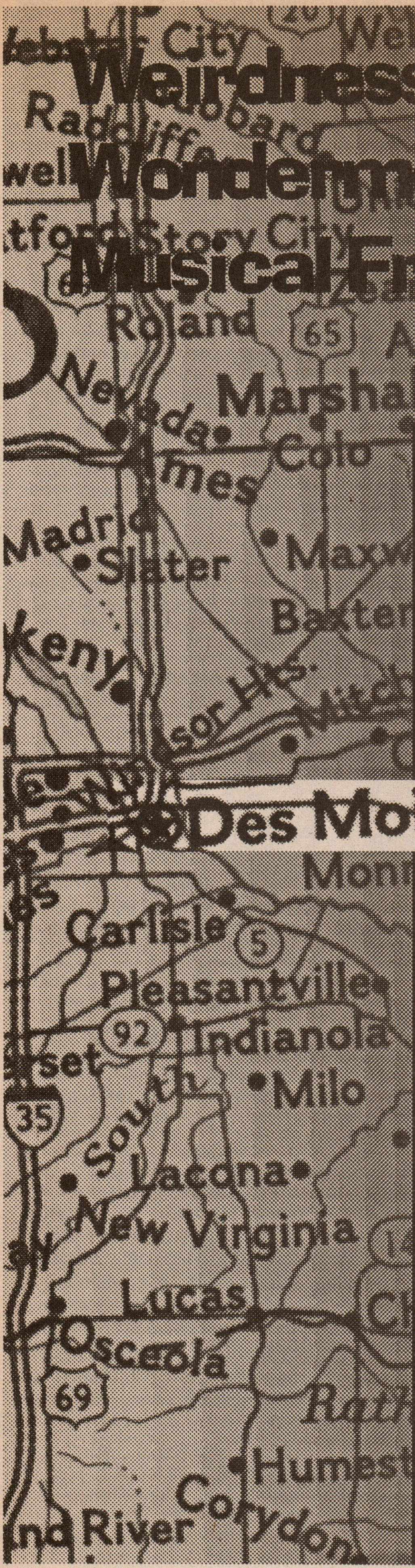
While we were in Madison I found out about a beautiful co-op label. I think it's called Pinecone Prod. Anyway it's cool because it's not really a money making gig for anyone. It turns out that some Madison guys were all about to release CDs individually. This Jerry guy who works at O' Cayz thought perhaps if they pooled together they could get some better buying power and increased credibility. All in all a good plan, cheap & effective - I like it. Bands on this label, as far as I know are Powerwagon and Tongue and Mr. Peabody, Jeff's band.

Paul and I were also in Milwaukee on this pan-Wisconsin Squealer Journey. We weren't in town long but we noticed a variety of smells (rotten fish, dead cattle, diapers and hops) and found out that when in Milwaukee be sure to catch Crockpot. This band is hot! Hot! They're hard to find and we didn't actually see them, but their music is fabulous. And always, when in Milwaukee, top your neighbor's tank before you refill your own. - out

"Standing here like a loaded gun, waiting to go off, I've got nothing to do but shoot my mouth off" - Greg Ginn

Weirdness and Wonderment On The Musical Frontier

by J. Nalle Hell



Question... If a quasi-metropolitan area already has sex and drugs, does it necessarily need rock n' roll? In my estimation the answer for Des Moines is an ever encouraging, "hell yes!" (but it's a damn site harder to start with just the rock n' roll...)

For those of you reading this through your 'jade' colored glasses at oh say, the Uptown bar, Des Moines is part of Iowa and although it could be termed the "strip-mall proving grounds" for the Western Hemisphere it ain't a bad place to feel a little froggy.

So you mix a couple of do-it-yourself entrepreneur's by the name of Jeff Wright and John Lemke into the equation and a space alternative to the, "you'd swear we were Molly Hatchet, no wait, Kiss, better yet Night Ranger," is born. Between the two of them they found a "primed for punk rock" warehouse near the triple-A ball field in the "spacious" warehouse district of D.M.. (You can't miss the place, it' s right next to Iowa Asbestos Co., I still can't tell if they install or remove?) Anyway, loans, luck and timing combined with the attitude that there should be a viable venue somewhere between sitting at home listening to records and paying fifty-bucks to see the "Giganto-tones" in the "Enormo-dome." They created a space down the way called Hairy Mary's.

Is it all coming into focus? It should. Many of you reading this will soon travel to see and or play music there, this is still an alright thing to do but you must note that the digs are under new management. We are now speaking of the Second Avenue Foundry.

Meet the new bosses, Brian Young and Eddie Ballard. They spoke recently about transition, taking over an established place and day to day running of a rock n' roll club and guess who was there?

Having had contact before with the outgoing Hairy Mary's regime, I wondered first what was making them leave. I spoke first with Brian, who does more in-house operational tasks, about the turnover to the Foundry crew. "We knew Jeff and John and we'd been good, paying customers for some time, so when they decided to get into something else we decided this was our chance to keep it going." (Jeff and John have since undertaken the Big Tomato Pizza Co., highly recommended and not too far from the Foundry. Ask Brian/Eddie for directions.) Eddie, who involves himself more with the booking aspects of running the Foundry, stopped by later and we discussed the scene in Des Moines.

It was imparted to me that there is a growing "artist" community in D.M. that is not limited to music. Brian said of this community, "We've had a lot of stuff lately by local artists not just music in this place." They're looking for a broad base of art to represent and almost anything is a possibility, jazz to paint to loud!

Being that my base of operations is in Minneapolis, I wondered aloud as to what was original/happening music that was coming through the Foundry and/or around Des Moines in recent times. "I'm real excited to see Punkinhead," a band from Fayateville Arkansas that Brian seemed pumped about several times during the interview . Eddie agreed and added Nine Pound Hammer and Molly McGuire. "They swing," Eddie said of the Hammer band, and the best part about Molly? "They're super fuckin' loud." I hear 'ya, for now anyway.

Locally they feel the scene is young and growing. There are a few more evolved outfits and plenty of party bands. If there is anyone in Minneapolis who remembers the days before, "I'm just here to be seen in the scene," let me know where you few go. In speaking with many national acts in my time(s) in Des Moines there seems to be a real beleaguered disappointment over the "big-city" attitude over community that is emitted in Minneapolis. Everyone has an "Uptown-apathy" story.

If there is a mission statement to all of this it's gonna fit here, Brian? "Rock n' roll is supposed to be fun, that's why we kept the place open and had a lot of fun doing it. I think the place is cleaner, friendlier and to tell you the truth I think it's reaching a lot more people than it did before." So you don't cater to a sound? "No, I don't think that we do... it's a rock n' roll club, it's liquid in and liquid out..." Thanks Eddie, once again you have crystallized my thoughts eloquently.

(Postscript: Contacting the 2nd Ave. Foundry for evening line up' s, or inquiring about your band's interest should be directed to... 515-244-5657... As a courtesy to you Uptown readers, you must dial a "1" before all those other numbers, otherwise the greatest opportunity to complete your call will significantly diminish. Hint: try dialing with shoes and socks off...)

The Top Thirty-One, or so, of 1994 by Mark Lazar

The following is a revised version of a list of the records released *circa* 1994 that I and I alone feel are worthy of more than three listenings. They are in no particular order, although you may think otherwise. I probably forgot some. I apologize, as if you cared. Anyway, during Christmas weekend I planted myself in front of the old hi-fi with a nice bottle of red wine and went back to listen to each of my selections for 1994. Like a good researcher, I jotted down a couple of notes for the records that grabbed me.

1 Eugenius, *Mary, Queen of Scots,* Atlantic
Almost unbearably playful and perfect guitar pop.

2 Killdozer, *Uncompromising War on Art under the Dictatorship of the Proletariat,* Touch & Go
Any record that deifies Earl Scheib, vilifies Sam Walton, and praises Knuckles the dog deserves praise itself.

3 aMiniature, *Depth Five, Rate Six,* Restless
Television and the Clash have a shootout at the Fender factory.

4 Arcwelder, *Xerxes,* Touch & Go!
I don't like Sugar, I like Arcwelder.

5 Wrens, *Silver,* Grass
Pixies: Don't imitate, emulate.

6 Fall, *Middle Class Revolt,* Matador Bassist Steve Hanley is, well, not God, but he damn well deserves to be canonized.

7 G. Love & Special Sauce, Okeh/Epic
All hail the big beat.

8 House of Large Sizes, *My Ass-Kicking Life,* Red Decibel/Columbia
This is the only record I heard all year which compels me to listen from beginning to end each time I put it on.

9 Motocaster, *Stay Loaded,* Interscope/Atlantic
The new AC/DC.

10 Superchunk, *Foolish,* Merge
Superchunk stops being a college band and starts being a real force.

11 Pigeonhed, Sub Pop
If soul must get twisted, lord, let it be this..

12 Leather Uppers, *O.K., Don't Say Hi,* Past It
Fuel, frenzy, and Paul Lynde

13 Magnetic Fields, *The Charm of the Highway Strip,* Merge Kraftwerk plays the Tammy Wynette/ Dolly Parton songbook.

14 Poster Children, *Just Like You EP,* Sire/Reprise
Keeping pace with Superchunk as college-rock grads.

15 Ass Ponys, *Electric Rock Music,* A&M
New songwriter of the year — Chuck Cleaver.

16 Frank Black, *Teenager of the Year,* 4AD/Elektra
Like a huge box of chocolates, except it's full of caramels and fudges—22 songs, no clunkers.

17 Fluf, *Home Improvements/Whitey on the Moon/Stocking the Lake with Brown Trout,* Headhunter/Cargo
The Motorhead school of Pop — find a hook and stick with it, just make sure it's good.

18 Frank Sinatra, *Duets II,* Capitol That's Dr. Sinatra to you, bonehead.

19 Beatnik Filmstars, *Laid Back and English,* La-Di-Da
America Sleepy, sneezy, bashful and grumpy.

20 Beastie Boys, *Ill Communication,* Grand Royal
I've got nothing to say about this record that you haven't already thought.

21 Girls Against Boys, *Cruise Yourself,* Touch & Go
So obsessed, with the Fall and Big Black, they could be from Iceland.

22 MC 900 Foot Jesus, *One Step Ahead of the Spider,* American
The Bukowski/Burroughs axis rediscovers Chandler rapping Kiss's "Detroit Rock City."

23 Big Star, *Columbia, Live at Missouri University,* Zoo
A revelation; bliss.

24 Hole, *Live Through This,* DGC A revelation; hiss.

25 Gastr Del Sol, *Crookt, Crackt, or Fly,* Drag City
Mangled but somehow pleasing.

26 Rancid, *Let's Go,* Epitaph
Isn't it 1984?

27 Oasis, *Definitely Maybe,* Epic The noise and the hooks make the hype worthwhile.

28 Neil Young, *Sleeps With Angels,* Reprise
His capacity to terrify never ceases to amaze me.

Reissue Prince, *The Black Album,* Warner Bros.
It's "Rock Hard in a Funky Place," not the other way around.

Reissue Johnny Thunders & the Heartbreakers, *D.T.K. Live at the Speakeasy,* Receiver
One of the two greatest live albums of all time. (With the Ramones' *It's Alive.*)

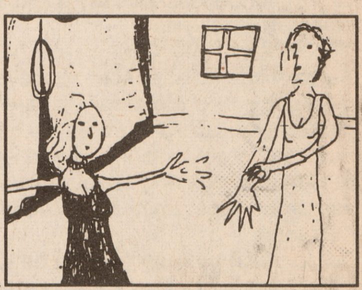
Reissue Bootsy Collins, *Back in the Day, the Best of Bootsy,* Warner Archives
The greatest bass player in the world.

Late entries:
Ripe, *The Plastic Hassle,* Beggars Banquet
Idaho, *This Way Out,* Caroline
R.E.M., *Monster,* Warner Bros.

Singles:
1. "Songs About Girls," Catherine, TVT
2. "Wish It All Away," Ivy, Seed
3. "Here We Go," Stakka Bo, Polydor
4. "Sorry Again," Velocity Girl, Sub Pop
5. "Violet," Hole, DGC
6. "Sticky Bun," fluf, Headhunter/Cargo
7. "Top of the World," Shonen Knife, A&M
8. "Sabotage," Beastie Boys, Grand Royal
9. "Little Bastard," Ass Ponys, A&M
10. "Salvation," Rancid, Epitaph
11. "Iron Lung," Radiohead, Capitol Import

The following was supposed to be a list of the records that, in my opinion, ought to be avoided, unless you're made of money; but I can't do it. I just love records too much, and if I were made of money, I'd probably own all of them, even the crappy ones like the recent stuff from: Big Head Todd, Da Da, Violent Femmes, Live, Whitney Houston, L7, Paul McCartney, Cracker, and Dinosaur Jr.

A Belated Christmas thought: This is the only time of the year in which television commercials encourage children to let potentially dangerous, costumed strangers into their homes in the hope that these people are indeed Santa.
Situation 1: A woman and her son decorate cookies. The woman tells the boy about his father's plan to dress up like Santa again this year. Enter Santa, who helps decorate. Son says, "Dad, your beard's on crooked," as the real father walks in the front door. The child *laughs*, even though he has no idea who this hirsute home-invading maniac is.
Situation 2: Two pre-adolescents, who are supposed to be asleep, watch from the staircase as a large man in a red suit slinks into their living room late at night and begins planting packages around the tree. When he's finished, he starts to eat from a plate of food on the end table. The children turn to each other, wide-eyed, and silently, adorably, mouth the word "Santa" rather than the word "burglar" (perhaps, my friend Jake suggested, he's even the Unibomber).
Sure, "Miracle on 34th Street" was a cute movie, and Natalie Wood spent her entire life as an absolute doll, but it's a dangerous world. And aren't our priorities a little skewed when it's okay for kids to let fat strangers into the house but not to watch "Beavis and Butt-head"?



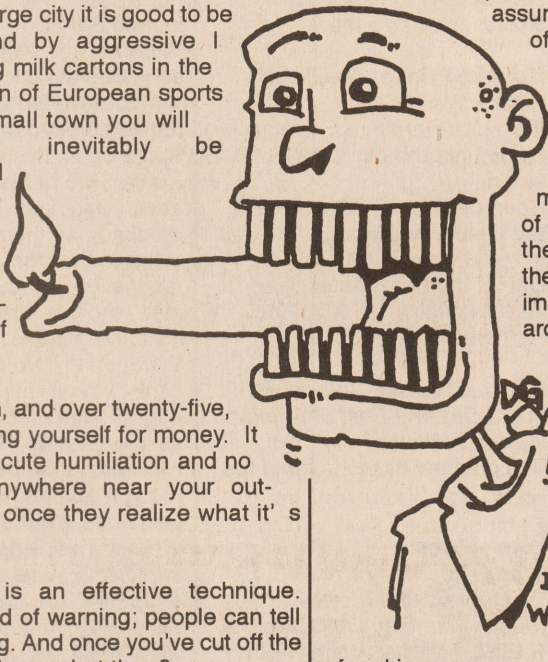
Ted Kersten © 1995

Advice For Would-Be Panhandlers

by John Colburn

If you are very young it may do to say you are starting a coin collection and that you hope someday to be vice-president of Motorola and that the Eisenhower dime reminds you of your mother; however this excludes you from your real goal of paper money which of course you must have to stuff in your shoes in winter, and I would say if you are very young you already have a high sympathy factor to exploit by watching a lot of Our Gang movies and trying to dress like them, even converting yourself to black and white and stealing grandpa's hats.

If you are in a large city it is good to be aggressive, and by aggressive I mean exploding milk cartons in the general direction of European sports cars but in a small town you will inevitably be beaten and dumped into some toxic body of water. The cut off line for this is a population of 16,700.



If you are a man, and over twenty-five, don't try exposing yourself for money. It will only bring acute humiliation and no one will go anywhere near your outstretched hand once they realize what it' s been touching.

Self-mutilation is an effective technique. However, a word of warning; people can tell if you are bluffing. And once you've cut off the expendable regions, what then?

If you are bald, it is quite effective if you head is covered with oozing sores. You will want to hold out your hat for the change, so that people can see you will eventually cover your head when you have enough money.

Selling pencils is a ludicrous waste of time, you might as well be selling lint from your pockets. These days panhandlers often sell IBM compatible Hawaiin shirts or laser activated tuxedo sweatstain removal kits or such similar nonsense, but I say avoid the world of commerce altogether.

Perhaps the most effective prop is to carry a child's toy, and the older you are the more pathetic the pull-behind ducky is, and you must not forget to stain it with green tears by putting food coloring in your eyes, which is a wonderful experience and I recommend it to everyone.

For location you will want to be near a college campus. If there are no campuses around, you can build your own from card - board but you will probably end up getting some kind of grant for advanced study in the development of department stores so you might want to try roaming the landfills with a wedding dress on and dollar bills sewn into your hair, just a suggestion, and then try the business centers, though this is more difficult because the people walking on these streets will either hate you or hate you worse.

Paradoxically, poor people will be your most gracious benefactors and policemen the last to protect you; the cops will assume you are some form of prostitute and demand you rub yourself on their badge, so it is best to spit directly into their faces before they can tell you to move along, although, of course, there is always the possibility one of them will enjoy the spitting immensely and follow you around.

Eating candles is also an effective and, at first, startling technique which has the added benefit of making your stool sample surprisingly colorful. Try eating various surprising objects while carrying a sign that reads "will not work for food or money"

Finally, there are the four commandments of panhandling:

1) As in most things, you will have to lie to be successful.

2) Nobody's buying the bus fare routine anymore.

3) Dignity is overrated

4) There is no difference between you and anyone else; every human being is a beggar.

FIRST AVENUE
MAINROOM

1-22 Poetry/Prose Fest-Cacophony Chorus part 2 Entry: House of Large Sizess& Bone Club

1-23 Metal Massacre

1-25 Spell w/ Push On Junior

1-26 Martin Zellar, Honeydogs, Scott Hampton Entry: Steeplejack & More

1-27 Buckwheat Zydeco w/ The Straw Dogs Entry: Carpetbaggers & More

1-28 Enrty: Mighty Mofos & More

1-29 Entry: Suspect Bill, Blue Meenies & More

1-30 Godbullies

2-1 Marilyn Manson

2-2 & 2-3 The Suburbs

2-6 Meditations-Bob Marley Birthday Celebration Entry: Chris Connelly & Band

2-7 NRBQ

2-10 Entry: Spectors & More

2-11 Nick Lowe

2-12 Bad Manners

2-16 Jesus Lizard

2-18 Simple Minds

2-20 Cows

2-25&26 Bob Mould

For More Info Call: 338-8388

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2/15 Season to Risk w/ Molly McGuire & Shiner
2/16 Las Toallitas w/ TBA
2/17 Wig w/ Twitch
2/18 Two Bong Shy w/ Spiritus
2/23 Big Big Bite w/ D.J.
2/24 Peabody w/ Danger Prone Daphne & Exit
2/25 Tongue w/ Push On Junior
3/4 Broadway Blues Band w/ TBA

Every Tuesday
Tates Blues Jam

Show Of Shows

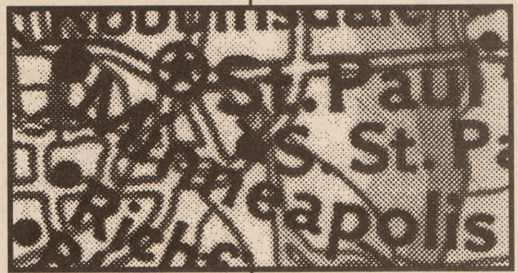
by Steve Birmingham

I'm not a rock critic, but I do play one on TV. Fear not, I also find them most annoying. It would be dif ficult to single out the worst genus, but let's do try. There's...

I. The overtly benign newsprint white guys
II. The au-so-courrant fashion scenester
   a) The phoney baloney Boomer scumbag from the national slickee
   b) The snotty art-damaged wannabe local poser
III. The just-so-darn-hardcore gutterpunk elitists
IV. The cold-hearted/clinical crotchety old dinosaurs
V. The clueless foreigner
VI. The soft rock specialist
VII. The east coast egomaniac
VIII. The Tabloidian Hack
IX. The young corporate pawn
X. The arrogant sexperts
   a) The closeted hetero-groupies
   b) The "angry" estrogen Snatch-22

So where do I fit in? I don't. I'm just the guy who brought the doobie, and here are my highlights from 1994. Now I didn't have Shellac, Johnny Cash, and Jayhawks money (etc., so this is a "what I caught" and not "what was" list

CONCRETE BLONDE (Feb.3, First Ave) Whenever Johnette comes over the C.C. Club jukebox, my friends stop whatever they're doing to flip me shit because I've been known to pine at the sound of her voice. The show was a flawless last look at true class.



ROCKET FROM THE CRYPT (Feb. 12, 7th St.Entry) Let's face it, they are the San Diego scene. All killer and no filler, one of America's finest.

THE SPINANES (Feb. 20, Uptown Bar) God talk about love rock! Just don't call them a duo. Talentless Barbies like Liz Phair & Sheryl Crow hogged the headlines, but Rebecca Gates is the dreamiest.

DRIVE LIKE JEHU/DOO RAG (June 18, 7th St.) I was blinded by the future of rock-n-roll that night. Let's hear it for Doo Rag's make-our-own-fun/reindeer games ingenuity, and Jehu's hybrid white noise.

VENISON (July 4, 7th St.) Our forefathers would've been proud. Rick "Rock's Renaissance Man" Fuller & Co., spat out a disturbing yet liberating set. No alterna-veneer here.

LOLLAPALOOZA (July 12, Harriet Island) I can't help but think how great these things would be if they got rid of the main stage and made 'em I.D. shows. Nirvana was missed. Way too many people for the space, but Rollerskate Skinny, The Verve, Luscious Jackson, and the Flaming Lips provided the soundtrack for some stoney summer fun.

MADDER ROSE/SWELL (July 22, 7th St.) NYC and San Fran' s finest in one sweaty room. Swell are masters of mood & sonic landscaping, a truly full-bodied sound not found in these parts since concept albums. Madder Rose make great make-out music.

THE MEKONS (July 30, First Ave) This was my first and only Mekons show, and I had a blast. So sue me. I know they're the rock critics jack-off poster children, but fun is fun.

GREG GINN (Sept. 7, 7th St.) Now I know you weren't at this show, and it's your loss. While Gap spokesman/MTV whore Henry Rollins continues to churn out flatulence, Greg Ginn is one cat who hasn't wasted away. His improvisational, jazzy-core brand of punk rock puts every two-bit power trio to shame.

MEAT PUPPETS (Oct. 10, First Ave) Brothers Kirkwood opened for STP at the St. Paul Civic, and I wish they hadn't. However, their salt-of-the-earth set blew me away . Long may you run guys. The Flaming Lips (Oct.18, State Theatre) Syd Barrett would be proud. Warner Brother's should get scurvy for having them open up for the Bay City Rollers, but if it means they'll never have to work at Long John Silvers again, cool. They're the rare kind of band that makes both the women swoon and the fellas feel all right.

Now, COWS, Babes in Toyland, and The Magnolias played too many shows to pick just one date. I caught four COWS shows, Five Babes in Toyland shows, and four gigs by the Magnolias. These bands rule, I've told them so. I'll shut up. I'd also like to mention how cool Grand Ole Daze, Cedarfest, and the Lowertown freebies were. Bye.

film gourmet

by Andy Grund

"I hope you don't like that 'Tears For Fears' shit there eh...chief."

I met Nells in a remote northern Minnesota forest on a outdoor commercial shoot for Arctic Cat snowmobiles. I was hired for two days as the director of photography and he as a grip.

8am Introductions are made as crew arrives. I was second to Nells' first arrival. Because of this I am spared the 'pussy' label the others got when they also refused a cocaine nummy, "It ain't cof fee, big guy." That was another reason he liked me— I'm tall. He's tall too. But he is also impulsive and burly — the flour and eggs of 'intimidation', you pussy.

1pm Lunch. Nells comes to sit with me on a tree stump, where I was previously sitting alone.

1:40 I like Nells. And not just because he likes me. He's got a certain thought pattern that doesn't permit for the feeling of remorse. If he says something that could be construed as offensive, it's brushed aside as fate and your inability to cope rather than his inability to adapt to the context of his surroundings. Much the same way a mathematics professor would move into his mother's house the day after she died, wasting no time with 'the mourning principle'.

3pm For a different camera angle Nells lifts an entire Arctic Cat snowmobile by himself. No one seems to take any special notice. Later he confides, "They're heavier than they look and they look pretty heavy, buckshot."

4pm This makes two people I now know with the name Nells. The first was fired from the drugstore where I used to work at during high school. Later I had heard, in hushed tones of course, that he 'took' drugs.

5:30 First day of shoot, early wrap. Two usual choices for dining—the small ripple of Chinese food with the sharing of shoot anecdotes and predictions followed by the sitting alone in a hotel room recalling shoot anecdotes and predictions *or* ride a wave of liquor with a surfboard made of hope and glory. Nells chose me to rip the curl.

6:30 Post hotel check-in, pre-showtime sunset. There are three of us, Nells, myself, and Alexander Motrin Gilroy, whose middle name was, he assured us, the name of someone famous long before it was ever a famous pain reliever. We are all in a truck made by Dodge.

7pm Nells drives us through the heart of Embarrass, Minnesota, and promptly returns to the first bar we saw. Embarrass is a one street town in the belly of the Vermilion Iron Range about 40 minutes Northeast of Hibbing and, besides its name, is known for nothing. It is the kind of place where you'll pay more for an *Arc-tic Cat* snowmobile than a local will for his *Ardicat* snowmobile.

7:05 Upon entering the bar Nells ruf fles a few feathers by announcing he is a two star general in the United States Army, I his counterpart in the Navy and that Alexander Motrin Gilroy "drove us here...officially."

7:20 Something happens that I have never seen before or since: Nells gets some fellow to buy the whole bar a round. We are popular because Nells is. We work harder at having a good time because the state that is NELLS demands it. The party Lombardi.

8pm Nells is a genuinely funny guy. It is solid humor in an old fashioned way; much more difficult than modern sarcasm. No cop/donut laffers, No wry commentary, no commercials or pop culture references of any kind, but no lamp shade and Hawaiian shirt either. "Aw dang, my hat's all stretched out. Some lady sat on it—'course I was wearing at the time." Comedy thy name is Nells.

10pm I guess it shouldn't have surprised me. When you get popular someone always wants to knock you down. It happens to Hollywood starlets and it happens to guys named Nells. While Nells had his back turned to everyone in the place (he was tending bar at this point) some neanderthal at the far end of the bar yells, "Y ou fuckin' bastard!" Of course my first thought is, "excellent, a steroid/prozac outburst—let the fireworks begin" but then I see him clutching a cheap jacknife with an open blade that is a mixture of every color but silver. As he walks behind the bar it becomes apparent that his object of desire is Nells who, of course, is the only one who will answer him. "No, *You* fuckin' bastard. You want a piece of me, sport?" Smiling. They're both smiling. Clearly these were two men savoring the moment, the thrill of anticipation. I really wanted Nells to break the bottom of a bottle off to match weapons but I guess he didn't think of it or maybe it's just that no one really does it. "T ake it outside, Ned," the bartender more or less stated. I had a feeling Ned had serviced this bar with entertainment before. Following several chorus's of 'you wanna go outside?' and 'yeah, you? Hold on I'll get my Grandma,' they went outside to meet the arriving police car. Nells came back smiling and ordered another beer; Ned didn't.

10:15 Nells buys the bar a round and suggests that Ned was really after me. "I can only keep 'em away from ya for so long, Sparky." He was rubbing my shoulders like a good corner man.

11pm My beer is empty. I look for Nells. Vanished. Twenty minutes later he comes through the back door out of breath. I ask him where he's been and he replies, "The bathroom. You know they got cable in there?" There was blood on his knees.

Midnight Through the use of phonics, Nells is teaching Gaelic to half the bar while the other half spins. I thought I saw a small fire in the corner and the bartender won't stop asking me for my business card.

Last Call Nells is on, Alexander Motrin Gilroy is on the floor and I'm on fire. I buy the bar a round.

1am Outside the bar I swear I see Nells with his arms around a police officer while wearing his hat. I think that's how we got to the restaurant.

2am Cops and food and Nells everywhere. I beat Of ficer Mike Mannon arm wrestling. From a pay phone Nells books us all on a cruise.

3am At the Hotel Nells fails to break into the swimming pool and then says he's going for a walk. Later, alone in my room I share anecdotes and predictions with a lamp.

Day 2

8am I'm not late, but I'm not early. Nells was. Smiling too. He says something about coffee grounds but nothing about the night before.

10am Nells cuts some twine with a knife that looks familiar. I try to play it cool, "Nice knife, coach." To which he replied, "Y eah, my grandmother gave it to me."

7pm Wrap. Nells asks me if I want to go to dinner. I say yes.

Every word of this is true.

If You're A Writer, Where's Your Book?

by Kelly Green

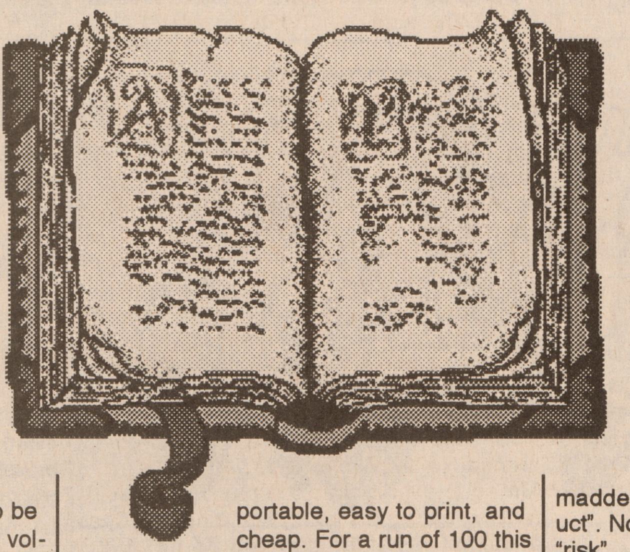
A lot of people call themselves poets and writers. They create occasional poems, they get up on open stages, they buy and read a poetry journal from time to time. Most of them lack an item of proof to back up their perceived occupation: a book.

If you're serious about writing you also need to be serious about promoting editing and publishing. I've been writing for publications for fifteen years, and if I had waited around for someone to "discover" me I'd be in a locked ward by now. The sad fact of the matter is this: major publishers don't give a shit about poetry because it doesn't make them enough money, established small presses don't particularly care for unsolicited manuscripts because they have their own darlings to publish, and you waste a lot of money sending manuscripts around the country only to be rejected. Who needs it? You probably deal with enough rejection in your life already. Publish yourself

After years of having published pieces in tiny journals, of collaborations, grant writing and readings I wondered about the next step, did a bit of research and started publishing my own books, three so far. I never live far from hand to mouth but find I can afford this process. In order to get a decent book together you have to be writing all the time because you need a volume of material from which to select pieces decent enough to publish.

Anyone who thinks their writing is all pretty good is full of shit. I can publish a 60 - 70 page book per year but need to write two to three times that amount to amass quality material. So, you must be working. Then you select pieces. Then you edit and edit and edit, fine tune every piece, throw out words that take up space, throw away whole pieces if need be, but get it right. Then it's fun time, arranging pieces, creating book sections, writing dedications and getting artwork. The next step is inputting your work onto a computer, and almost everyone has access to one. Type it on a disc, or pay someone to do it for you. Then layout. I've been fortunate enough to find a computer genius who created his own layout program. Use Quark or Page Maker or whatever you need, then laser print it, at Kinko's or through a friend. Keep your costs down. Proofread the manuscript at every step and have someone not familiar with the material read it too. They'll catch mistakes you'll miss. Count on still having one or two in the finished book because everyone is a fuck up sometimes.

Now call the printers around town, compare prices. I do runs of 100, can't usually afford much more than that, and since I'll be selling almost all of them myself, that's plenty to unload. Minuteman does a fine high speed xerox printing job for a fair price. My books are 5 1/2" by 81/2" in size, nice and



portable, easy to print, and cheap. For a run of 100 this size, covers and text, it comes to about $2.00 apiece. Next, call around to the binders, compare prices, I found a good bindery in New Hope who does the job for ten cents apiece. Finished product: you get a perfect bound portable book, maybe just one piece of art on the cover (more art will cost you more to print) for less than $3.00 apiece. Throw in possible extra charges: payment for artwork, computer work, etc., maybe another 25 to 50 bucks, and you have a hundred books that should cost you no more than $350.00. Save up the money, you can afford it. Sell them for 5 bucks, save the money , turn it back into your next book.

Public Relations is next. Don't waste too many copies looking for a book review. This is strictly a local operation, at least until we get a new small press distributor in the area. Send copies to the local papers, find out who reviews for them, and put their name on the envelope. Call around town and set up readings in coffee shops, bookstores, bars - to promote and sell your book. Get it into peoples faces, make your cheap ass friends buy one instead of listening to them whine about why they should get one for free. Make posters and flyers and put them up around town. Put some books in a bookstore or two on consignment basis but, again, don't waste many here. The bookstore takes 40%, you end up making change per copy after the cost and they end up making dollars. But you need the visibility they can offer.

The best advice I have for anybody interested in this at all is to get your ass in gear and do it yourself. Why piss and moan about uncaring publishers, dead audiences, the cruelty of the world in its treatment of artists, blah blah blah. A writer writes books instead of talking about writing books. A writer has to be a publisher unless fabulous wealth, fantastic connections, or incredible brown-nosing enter into the picture. You'll wait forever for a press to print you because they like what you write. They're more concerned with turning people into something they want to publish. Take a look at the output of various presses and you'll find a maddening "sameness" about their "product". Not many of these people use the word "risk".

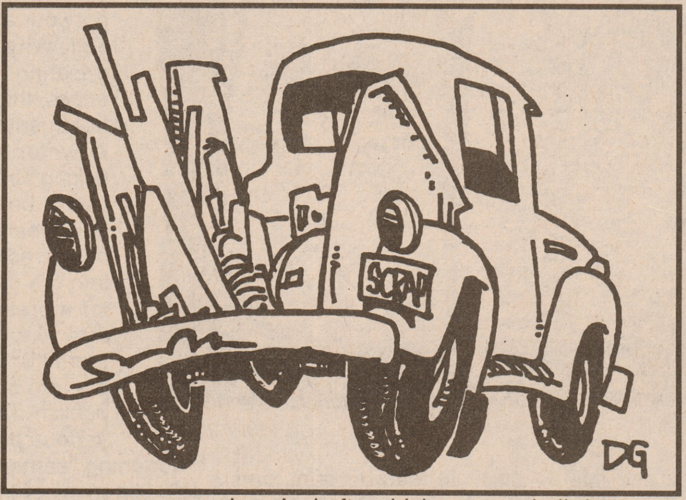
Unfortunately, Kelly won't be on hand for the next issue. We do have a few back logged stories of his which we'll print in #4. -Ed.

SCRAPPING

by Paul Dickinson

Somewhere slightly north of St. Paul ,we were nervously attending to business. We had quite a haul: the van was full of AC's, car radiators, car batteries and electric wire. To be technical about it, I guess we weren't supposed to be there. All that was left to scrap was an ancient fringe. I whacked the compressor with a pipe wrench. **Hsssss.** A vile smell filled the air. I came to about 15 minutes later, surrounded by a blue sky . My friend was leaning against the van, coughing. He then coughed out two words: "Ammonia...Gas".

That incident scared me for about two days, and then I was back at it. Metals Recycling, otherwise known as "scrapping" is an obsession as well as a means of turning filthy junk into cash. It is quite an industry in the Twin Cities. The scrap yards contain people ranging from bums with a few beer cans to well paid contractors taking in extra materials from a job.. I've hesitated to share the secret of scrapping openly for I have that fear that all scrappers hold in their hearts: someone else might get my scrap. But now I have realized that the majority of people are to scared, too lazy and to reasonable to scrap. The concept is simple: You find the metals, break them down, and bring them to a scrap yard. Yet in this process the scrapper in bound to not only witness but engage in the true insanity of the city. For the protection and safety of all involved parties, scrapping is a covert activity. I try to avoid humans at all costs. People behave like children who want back a neglected toy if they think their trash is worth money. My policy is to ask for permission only if I'm confronted. I take this bold initiative because I know I'm both cleaning up the town and making a noble effort to pay my rent. Scrapping is good for those of us who have problems with "supervision", "management " and other conspiracies against the development of the adult brain. One roams around in an eternal quest for the discarded gems of this commercial and industrial empire. You are your own boss. You own your victories, your defeats, and your money at the end of the day.



Praises to the übermensch aside, it is always best to scrap with a partner. For a scrapping partnership to work properly, the partners have to assume opposing roles. One partner is extremely aggressive, ready to scrap the entire planet. The other partner is worried about safety and legal realities. Hopefully a balance is reached that gives you enough scrap and gets you back in one piece. It can also be a fun experience to share. W ith someone else, bizarre as it might sound, scrapping is a beautiful way to learn the metro area. I have discovered countless little parks, cool diners and exotic shops, as well as the liquor stores that sell until 10 PM on a weeknight. Being in the industrial areas, you become aware of how the beast of the city operates and how it just falls apart. You see the core of its spine and its outermost tentacles. And after driving around all day you also learn to appreciate something else: home.

The problem with scrapping is that it's not only an adventure its a job. It took me years to learn how to distinguish the different metals by sight. Breaking the metal down is a grueling task. Everything must be separated into its different type in order to get the top dollar value. Mixed metals are called "breakage" and you're real lucky if you get 12 cents a pound for them. I have taken apart entire engines and transmissions, cut open huge commercial AC's and torn everything imaginable off abandoned cars. Power tools become your personal angels. When I lived in New England I was so broke I went into abandoned houses and ripped out plumbing with my bare hands. It was prehistoric. It becomes such a struggle. There is always some damn screw or bolt slowing you down, holding you back, mocking you. The faster you work, the higher your hourly wage. This is why the selection of a partner is so important, because you need she or he to do their share of labor . And there is no workman's comp or paid sick leave. As tough as the breakdown can be, I must admit I find nothing more therapeutic than slugging down a can of malt liquor and bashing something apart with a crowbar.

Scrapping also makes one realize the absurd random nature of the universe. You begin to understand the meaning of luck. Luck is finding a huge demolition site right after the workers have gone home. I have loaded up my entire van with scrap while rush hour traf fic whizzed right by. In posh neighborhoods everyone with a heavy duty truck and a pa* of work boots and gloves is considered a "workman." This gives one amazing access to a variety of different areas. But what really gives a scrapper that extra edge is pure finical desperation. This enables you to drive around for days, unable to find anything, and still keep moving. In all lines of work, persistence will be rewarded, and scrapping is no different.

The bright and warm hearted people that understand the scrapping mission love to get involved. People call me all the time to tell me where they saw something. I have helped folks clean out dozens of barns and garages. But the actual scrappers as a group are impossible to unite, because we are all competing for the same thing. I turn green with envy If I see a truck full of scrap I didn't find. As you wait in line to get your metal weighed, there is very lithe chit chat, just a lot of nervous glances. You become very possessive of your load, the symbol of your hard work. If someone ever ripped off my scrap, I have to be honest and say I' d fly into an uncontrollable rage. So If you decide to scrap, I can't even wish you luck. As for every one else, leave some milk and cookies for the scrapper.

New World Order Reading List

by John Townsend

"And the West, encumbered by crippling alliances and burdened with a morality too rigid to accommodate itself to the swing of events, must eventually fall."

George in Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf by Edward Albee

"...and hold as our flag! In this dark march toward whatever it is we're approaching."

Blanche du Bois in A Streetcar Named Desire by Tennessee Williams

Ever since the rushed passage of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in a special November Congressional session, you may have noticed the term New World Order" being used by public of ficials more frequently. Some say the GATT, a 22,200 page monstrosity, essentially bequeaths US sovereignty to a global pro corporate entity called the W orld Trade Organization (WTO), a 120 nation council of unelected representatives - one from each member nation. The US vote carries the same weight as a tiny country such as, say, Belgium. Who the representative is and how he/she will be selected is not known to most Americans. And perhaps most fascinating of all is that not only are labor and environmental groups on the left opposed to it, but the libertarian ranks of the National Rifle Association (NRA), Perot populists, and patriotic veterans sick of keeping dirty secrets, are united in opposition to the NWO push as well. How intriguing that the supposedly liberal Bill Clinton and right winger Newt Gingrich both backed the GATT.

You may remember George Bush spouting about the NWO during the UN-induced Gulf War, when the US seemed to become arsenal central" for the planet at large. You may have attributed it to Mr. Bush's zeal or to arrested development. However, actually the NWO may be an intricate and sacred concept that goes back, and I mean, way back.

I've assembled a "New W orld Order" reading list that goes from one to six in descending order of darkness. It is an intensely absorbing and very arguable selection, to be sure.

(1) **HOLY BLOOD, HOLY GRAIL** by Michael Baigent, Richard Leigh, and Henry Lincoln.

This enthralling and learnedly plausible paperback speculates on the possibility of Christ's crucifixion as actually being a stage managed event in the garden of Aramathea, meant to deflect from Jesus! actual flight from Israel to a southwestern European base. It hypothesizes that Mary Magdalen was not, in fact, a prostitute, but was, most likely, a noblewoman. (Hence, the automatic demonization of sex workers and sexual minorities by Christianity and some sects of feminism.) The Jesus bloodline is traced through medieval royalty and into secret societies, some of which still are said to wield monolithic behind the scenes influence. Revelation as a prophecy is called into question, but Revelation as a blueprint for an imperialistic strategy whose aim is global totalitarianism? Well, you read and decide for yourself.

(2) **MIAMI** by Joan Didion. (Vintage Press)

Didion's exquisite spare style moderates the mysterious way Miami's local Republican-Hispanic power structure seems to hold double standards regarding international drug cartels. And guess which military and whose customs department seems to sail with the ebb and flow of certain enigmatic shipments?

(3) **IN THE ABSENCE OF THE SACRED** by Jerry Mander. (Sierra Club Books) Mander chills with an overview that depicts the 20th century romance with tech and high tech as programming society for Armageddon. Through scrupulous analysis and piercing personal anecdotes, Mander reveals how Gnostic corporations have steadily, systematically bought of f a technophobic public, setting it up for technocratic enslavement. It is also a devastating psychological portrait of the mass delusional character of the Reagan generation and their baby boomer offspring. Computerized ~ privacy invasion, computerized warfare, and their potentially catastrophic global repercussions are soberingly examined.

Since IN THE ABSENCE OF THE SACRED'S 1991 publication, European prisoners are known to have had computerized chips surgically interred within their anatomy. In this light, consider how GATT legitimizes prison labor, and how the Belgian Economic and Surveillance Terminal (B.E.A.S.T.) is said to be a databank beyond compare, far beyond.

(4) **THE UNSEEN HAND** by A. Ralph Epperson. (Publius Press)

Epperson's conservative view oddly complements, rather than contradicts, Mander's primarily leftist insights. THE UNSEEN HAND, like HOLY BLOOD, HOLY GRAIL, is one fabulous historical page turner. Epperson boldly asserts that a conspiratorial view of history is far more credible than an "accidental" view of history. m e shady origins of the Federal Reserve Bank as well as President Wilson's alleged egomania are cryptically portrayed. Churchill and Eisenhower are ~ savaged, whereas Joseph McCarthy is peculiarly vindicated. I've often wondered why Ike, who profited so exceedingly from McCarthyism, never seemed to be tainted by its bloodsport reputation established in years since. Moreover, President Roosevelt and Stalin are shown as complicit in not only the strange deaths of close associates, but in dividing up sovereignty of certain countries, not to balance power, but to appease hidden economic agendas.

(5) **AIDS AND THE DOCTORS OF DEATH** by Alan Cantwell Jr., MD. (Aries Rising Press)

Yes, Dr. Cantwell attempts to make the case that the AIDS virus was indeed manufactured and was infiltrated into Carter era gay subculture, as well as parts of Africa and Haiti. He makes stunning connections between the pharmaceutical/ medical conglomerate and its incestuous relationship with government. In sum, Dr. Cantwell's arguments are both convincing and harrowing.

(6) **BEHOLD A PALE HORSE** by William Cooper. (Light Technology Publishing)

This supposed expose by a military insider is a consummately terrifying work that seems to be alternately brilliant and fanatical. It has been hotly debated. However, Cooper awakens one to the bizarre manner in which the judicial system has come to in intrude into personal lives as well as property ownership. It also updates and modernizes secret society theories d reveals flaws in such myopic oversimplifications as the NWO = a Masonic or "Jewish" conspiracy. Cooper also illuminates controversies surrounding the UFO furor. Perhaps most horrific is that BEHOLD A PALE HORSE contains a copy of an NWO style constitution. Within Cooper's surveillance ridden view of the world, it would seem that such a "new age" could only be realized through genocidal global purges enacted with swift and sweeping clarity on a grand epic scale.

Whether you accept Cooper's assessment or not, you'll definitely be moved to reexamine your own socio-political conclusions. His is one of those very rare books that can shatter consciousness, but I suggest you read it in conjunction with the other works, as well as other books mentioned in their bibliographies. Everyone will make different connections. That, of course, is what makes it all so fascinating.

Watt: History Lesson Part III

an interview by Paul Bernstein

San Pedro - the port of Los Angeles. A reality apart from the rest. My only recollections of the place from growing up was taking a field trip in elementary school to the Maritime Museum down by the water . Dusty old place...the drive there seemed so long. You know you're almost there as the imposing structures of an oil refinery rise up from the horizon, speeding down the Harbor Freeway.

San Pedro is a working class town with no frills. Frequent bars, liquor stores, mom-and-pop retail, and the ubiquitous low-rise Southern California apartment buildings are all this town seems to offer at first glance. The swankiest part of town is the harbor itself - where luxury awaits those more privileged than the average San Pedran aboard some of the worlds finest cruise ships. You can see these ships sail in and out from just outside Mike Watt's apartment door.

I've been in and around the same places as Mike Watt over the years. I grew up in Hollywood and rubbed shoulders with a lot of the punks in the early days. I saw Black Flag, X, the Minutemen, Circle Jerks, and Fear way back when punk rock was still 'alternative'. The first time I actually met Mike Watt was in October, 1989. I was one of a three member audience at a fIREHOSE show in Cupertino the day after the earthquake. They essentially played for me and my buddies while the rest of the region braced for the next aftershock. What follows is a transcript of the conversation I had with him the second time we met - five years later.

PB: You've inspired a generation of bass players. How do you feel about that?

Watt: When I was a teenager I only wrote one song. It was called "Mr. Bass King of Outer Space", because I had an inferiority complex about bass guitar. I figured, wow, this is where they put the lame guy...I tried to champion the thing.

PB: Yeah, the bass wasn't too prominent in a lot of that rock from the sixties. Just sort of ambient noise....something that plodded along with the drums.

Watt: I wasn't sophisticated enough, I couldn't hear it. I was an idiot. Shit, we didn't know that your eighth note had to be the other guy's eighth note, we thought that it was like a taste thing, like oh I like tight strings, I like loose strings, this is before high school. We never put it together that the tightness meant the note. You can imagine what it fuckin' sounded like. Then with the Minutemen we wouldn't use tuners, we thought it was bourgeois.

PB: Do you want to talk about D. Boon at all? Where did you meet?

Watt: Here in Pedro. We were like 12. 1971. He was playing army with his friends. He jumped out of a tree on me, thought I was the enemy. I took him to my apartment, he had listened to all these George Carlin records, learned all the bits.

PB: He must've had you rolling.

Watt: He was wailing on it. I thought he was the smartest guy in the world! I couldn't believe it. I didn't know he had learned it all from a record, I thought he was making it all up. So I went home with him...went to his house every day after that....I just dug D. Boon.

PB: What's the Bright Orange Sunshine Band?

Watt: Bright Orange V an. Yeah that was our band. We played all Alice Cooper, T. Rex, Blue Oyster Cult, Black Sabbath. We were corny. Corny ass band.

PB: Corndogs...

Watt: Totally. This was before punk. Before people wrote their own fuckin' songs....that's another thing, y'know, and I don't know if that's really bringing it to people now. "Oh, wow , they right their own songs"...fuck man, in those days no one we knew wrote their own songs...no one.

PB: When did it happen? Seeing the guys in South Bay, Dez, Greg Ginn...

Watt: We just saw these guys doin' it, man. They can do it, we could do it. It was all different. I can't tell you just how different it was. Different points of view . Being an audience member at a stadium show, then getting your own band together, with songs that you wrote, playing them for people. That was another world. You couldn't relate that it was the same fucking thing...it was just our turn. So we attacked it with a vengeance once we started to get it going. The Minutemen recorded every six months.

PB: That's what George (Hurley) was saying.

Watt: Those were our flyers. In those days you put out records to tour so people would know about you. It would make your band get better. You'd have to learn the songs, write new ones....Then with fIREHOSE it slowed down to every year and a half, two years.

PB: What's it like to do the first Minutemen release in ten years? Is it therapeutic?

Watt: I'm very proud of it. It's before Paranoid time, so it's like our first release - last. With songs on it that hadn't been released before, except for "Joe McCarthy's Ghost", but he played it so much differently than George I wanted people to hear it. It's like a Samba. It's really funny. He was a Polka drummer - Frank Tonche - and after two gigs, punk scared him and he ran. George is much braver. He's a welder - Frank Tonche - from Pedro. Greg (Ginn) saw those gigs, asked us to do *Paranoid Time*. We got Georgie in three weeks. He learned the songs, we

recorded. One night, recorded and mixed, three hundred bucks. SST 002.

We recorded *The Punch Line* and we had only sold three hundred of *Paranoid Time* - but that was all of them! Go for it...It's the only vocal George ever did, he did a little speech in the middle of "Ruins" . He got all embarrassed about it, he'd never do it live and we'd ask him, come on Georgie. Those days it was different. George wrote a lot of words for us. It was easy for me to write music because I'd get lyrics from George and d. Boon. The way played with a pick. *What Makes A Man Start Fires* is just out-and-out rhythm guitar bass. There's a song on that album called "Polarity". And this man in Mew York gave me his new album - it only has two songs - one on each side - and one of them is "Polarity". What he does is takes the first few chords of it and then it turns into this 25 minute feedback jam. It's the most bizarre cover...no words. In a way it was really nice, I felt really honored by the guy.

PB: Ever get any feed back from Madonna when you did "Burnin'

That's what I was afraid of with this wrestling record. I was into songs hemming it in. I don't wanna come up with a '90's version of a whipping post. Like that guy's cover of "Polarity". I mean, it was bizarre. It was like "nee nee nee, nee nee nee, d u n n n n , a w w w , o o o h h , AWWWWWWWWRWWWWR-RRRRWWWA, like he leaned it up against the amp and just walked away. Builds up a little bit then calms down, then a little bit, not much. He said he was doing a gig...I missed the gig....he said he has a gig for that and he has

punk rock is this musical utopia in my head where it's very exciting and I don't know what the next band is going to be like and there's a lot of personality involved. It's something unexpected made very real with life and feeling. It's not like an arm band that you can put on. So it's hard for me to relate to a young guy and get his idea of what punk rock is. In a way it' s his older brother's music, one out of a hundred older brothers, the main older brother music was Led Zeppelin. What they're doin is they're making this the main

"...I had an inferiority complex about bass guitar. I figured, wow, this is where they put the lame guy..."

they wrote it, it had a rhythm to it, and I could play of f that, and have variety. I went through batches of writing songs and call them 'track housing' put the garage over here, the door over there, and these guys would keep it interesting. Georgie stopped writing when he stopped working this job. He used to go to this job at 4:30 in the morning working a lathe. He told me he'd be in this half-conscious state and he'd think of these songs and they'd have really bizarre connections because of the half-bake. They were really neat. "Search", "The Anchor", "Joy".

PB: Those are great songs. I think about them when I write songs sometimes...

Watt: (Laughs) Lead bass. "Seller Be Sold" is the most intense. By that time, *What Makes Man Start Fires* is a weird Minutemen record. It's the only one where I wrote all the music. None of the others are like that. It' s also the last one where I play with a pick. See, punk rock was too fast, I couldn't use my fingers, I had to use a pick. But I had gotten so much into the pick that I was playing rhythm guitar. Listen to "Bob Dylan Wrote Propaganda Songs" or "Seller Be Sold" - I'm playing rhythm guitar, I'm Paul Stanley. So to purge myself from that I just stopped playing with a pick. So all of "Double Nickels..." is fingers except "Shit From An Old Notebook". That's the last song I Up" on that Ciccone Youth LP?

Watt: No, no (laughs). W e did that for her. That was in a weird time. I did that before I met Edward. It was the second recording I did with Sonic Youth, the first was this thing I did for *EVOL* , Kim's bass...

PB: Where does Crimony fit in?

Watt: After Ciccone Youth. Evol was the first thing I did after D. Boon got killed, then Ciccone Youth. Then Crimony. Crimony was bizarre. I had never played with a piano player before. Me and D. Boon just didn't know any.

PB: Yeah it was weird - so different

Watt: Yeah, its already got the bass..

PB: Yeah, it's not like that thing you and George did with Elliot Sharp.

Watt: No,..

PB: That's <u>way</u> different, really out there.

Watt: That could've been <u>way</u> better. There was no communication between me and George. Really bummed me out 'cause I thought Elliot really gave us an opportunity to grow. I did something like that with Joe Baiza, Tony Cicero and Jack Brewer on a Saccharine Trust record called *World Broken* . A band where we just made up songs and wore tuxedos. The most ridiculous fucking thing I ever did. When we mixed it we got to edit it so you didn't have to hear the whole fucking jam. I'm not really comfortable with that kinda stuff.

little kids, six amps, he gets kids to come up and play the knobs as they're feeding back. The album's called "Sink the Aging Process". It's weird ...the other song's about the same on the other side. (really loud) AAWRU-URHRRRRRRRRRRRR. Doesn't have the little chords at the beginning, like mine. That's a trip man. So I think that's maybe why people recorded on my record. To see themselves dif ferently. I think it's kinda neat that this guy did this with my song. His name's Adam Licht. Can't think of the label.

PB: The scene is really different these days then it was back in L.A....... in the early eighties. You couldn't go to a show without maybe getting your nose broken or getting gobbed on, and in a way that was kind fun.

Watt: That's 'cause the numbers were smaller.

PB: Yeah, I suppose.

Watt: Now the massive numbers can be painful....

PB: Now it' s just so dif ferent. Y'know we used to slam, now they call it moshing, where the fuck did that come from?

Watt: I don't know. When <u>I</u> started it was pogoing. Supposedly Sid Vicious invented it... I think the big difference is that it used to be the music that misfits belonged to, and now it' s like if you want to belong, then you're into this music. It' s kinda backwards. But hey, y'know, there're parallel universes, and to me music. That's what I was always afraid of - if punk rock becomes the main music, what's going to be against that?

PB: It's not just the music, it's the people too. I try to have an open mind about...you've gotta think that these guys might be my fans...

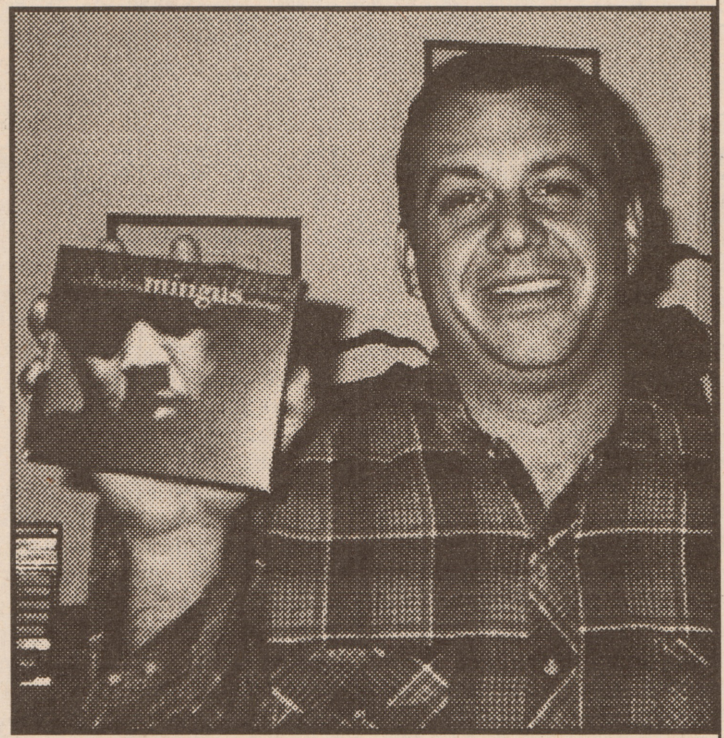
Watt: These guys are in charge of their scene. Think of Abbie Hoffman, Jerry Rubin...these guys were like ten, fifteen years older then the kids they were leading. By the time it gets mass appeal its been all diluted. It' s just a fucking pose. You gotta take heart in little victories. I try to write better songs, I try to...I don't know if I can do a lot about the things outside of me. It's weird how it got popular....I always loved it.

PB: If you think about it some more you could even separate the 'punk generation' into 'pre-Nirvana' and 'post-Nirvana' worlds.

Watt: What's weird about it for me is...the Minutemen, we had our thing, people came to our shows, punk got bigger with the other bands...our thing really didn't grow with that. So I never saw it get bigger. Saw them bands, and I knew they were into their youth, into Black Flag, that's how they grew up. Black Flag was <u>the</u> punk rock gig. They wrote the whole circuit. They gigged all year, a lot of towns...It' s a trip now...Green Day...y'know...

PB: It is a trip. They're not like

the punk rock I remember
Watt: It's not like they could be. MTV reality - didn't have it way back when. It was just different.
PB: It's not like I expect them to be...
Watt: There was a lot more rock n rollers fuckin' running things. It was fucked in a lot of ways...and then the '70's, a lot of them punk bands, especially the English ones, they were signed...they were like rock and roll bands, just different clothes. They weren't like Flag, starting your own label...nothing like that, so, y'know, maybe its always been a let-down. I think people gotta make out of it what they can, cause, basically, a lot of these sales are to kids. You can't put yourself in their place. You can't think like a fourteen year old, fifteen year old...I can't, I just can't! I've read Chuck Berry interviews where he says I write these kind of lyrics, because that's what a sixteen year old wants to hear . I'm not into that...that's when the kids should dump the old guys and listen to the guys their own age. You have to be vital....it's easy just because I've been around and survived all these years. It's only circumstance...I've still gotta get in the ring with newer bands, younger guys. It's a trip about it...y'know how I'm feeling old against these guys, when I, shit,...the Rolling Stones look to me like a bunch of skeletons, if I'm old what are those mother fuckers? It's all relative though, and the kids, they gotta reinvent it all for themselves. What's weird about music is that it's all about sound and a way of delivering it.
PB: You guys opened for Stone Temple Pilots and you said something like you weren't gonna wear a flannel, cause it's like...
Watt: I wouldn't wear 'em on that tour. I wore a new-wave suit. That was weird. I'm an insane crotchety weird guy I guess. I just didn't wanna wear flannels that tour. I took all my clothes off on the last gig, shaved my beard off...
PB: On-stage?
Watt: Yeah..Boulder, at Red Rocks with the Buttholes and Stone Temple Pilots.
PB: That must've been weird...you guys, Butthole Surfers and Stone Temple Pilots? That's diverse and all but, I can see fIREHOSE on tour with the Surfers, 'cause there's a lot of people that are into both of you but...
Watt: Rock is sort of like boxing. In boxing, you notice how there's no real like, league play. O.K...You fight him, now you have to fight him, and him. It's like gigs; promoters have to get together...it's the same thing with bands. There's no league.



O.K...we're going up against Stone Temple Pilots tonight...it's a show, a gig, a package. When I had D. Boon and we were the Minutemen, we were into it man. Put us up with anyone...us against the world. I looked for the more the merrier - play for hardcore kids who spit on you...I was into it. Y'know, I thought it was bizarre, but we had a chance to play gigs. I wasn't gonna take any of it for granted.
I was passionate about it...I just go for it. I'm still amazed that I got a chance to do it. Fuck, if you knew where me and D. Boon came from, I mean shit. Only punk rock...you bet we needed it. Without it we couldn't have done anything. I don't know what that means to a guy , where all his class listens to it - he's gonna get the record too. In a way it might turn back into some weird fringe music. In a way they can't kill it, because there will always be lame guys, especially starting out. So how can you wipe that out? Punk: as long as it's not a haircut, or a guitar style, it cannot die. Woody Guthrie, Bob Dylan...Thomas Jefferson...fuck, it's all punk.
PB: Tell me about fIREHOSE breaking up.
Watt: Naw. I just pulled the plug on it. Not really a break up.
PB: Was it getting old?
Watt: fIREHOSE 7 1/2 years, Minutemen 6 years... I owed Edward a lot for coming out from Ohio...
PB: George (Hurley) said he was out in North Carolina.
Watt: He moved all of a sudden over the summer. It was a trip. He lives in Chapel Hill. People tell me he's writing songs. That's a good town for bands...Lots of people playing...Cat's Cradle.....he said he didn't like some people....didn't like California. I'm very proud of him.....I've done a few gigs since he left. I did a little duet with Spot, played something with Nels. I want to get a band together and go on tour in March.
PB: Ed Crawford evolved with you guys. It's obvious on the records.
Watt: I like the first one though. I like some of the songs I wrote, over the years...but there's something about the first one I like.
PB: A lot of those songs were DOS.
Watt: A lot of fIREHOSE always was DOS...but those were written for D. Boon, some were written with Edward. He came to my house...one of those was written the first day he came.
PB: What about "Brave Captain"? A lot of us thought that was about Ed...
Watt: No, Edward wrote the chords for that, and they were like stories. I asked him to strum it a dif ferent way. No, "Brave Captain" was about Ronald Reagan. This movie about a sunk ship...lifeboat goes over, and this drunk keeps calling the officer 'Brave Captain', he's gotta lead this boat. Sort of about me having to start over again...not about Edward at all. With songs it's about the guy writing it, the guy listening to it, and the fucking Grand Canyon in between. That's what original sin is - being separate. You just can't know. In some ways it's a gift. Just think if you knew what everybody really meant all the time? But songs...they can be about several things. Shit...one of my favorite songs is William Poorboy's "Up Around the Bend", y'know, Creedence. I think all he wants to do is get up around the bend. Intense song. What was "Born On the Bayou" about? He wasn't born on the Bayou.
PB: I don't want to dwell on this, but it just seemed to me and my buddies, y'know, this is about Ed. He's not another big gun - never heard of the guy before and here he is playing with the smokin' rhythm section. The line that does it is "There are doubts regarding your ability".
Watt: I think Edward thought that that was a way that I could start over again - with a guy who had never played before. I wrote a song for Edward though...on *If'n* I wrote this song for Mike Stipe. He told me he was going to make a solo record and he wanted a song, so I wrote him a song, and I was working this rhyme...I thought it was funny having Edward singing, cause...it was bizarre, the last band that Minutemen toured with was R.E.M. and here we've got this guy who sang like Mike Stipe. Written with Edward in mind

singing it, not really about him. Not really about Michael Stipe either...I get letters about that song. People all upset, like Jesus Christ (shaking his head...). Let me see...um..."Tell 'em Boy". on this new record, I wrote that for him. That's a trippy song. The words are kind of about him. The idea of a guy in a band. One guy writes a song, shows his song to the band, then the other guy shows his song. Cute things like that (laughs). I tried writing songs with him in mind when I wanted him singin' them. outside, the lame ones hiding on the label, and all the ones that didn't get picked got put on the fourth side. It was all mixed in one night. That record cost $1,100.00, I paid for it.

PB: Jesus Christ!!! In one night?!?

Watt: Mixed. I'm really proud of it. Over ten years ago I did it. Georgie too. It' s a good thing. Probably the best thing I ever recorded. Eight tracks. George is half the tracks...kick, snare, and the toms in stereo. It's weird... There's a lot of ways that I schizophrenic.

PB: I recognize a lot of these names from old days SST and up...

Watt: Old friends of mine and I've never gotten to record with 'em...ever.

PB: Do you want to do another three piece?

Watt: Yeah. Just for a tour...get back into it. I should try that one day; having a bunch of guys on stage...but I'm not ready for that. (About the album) I was just interested in different personalities. They're all the same fucking machines - guitars, drums - it's weird

"...punk rock. You bet we needed it. Without it we couldn't have done anything."

PB: There were a couple songs you guys did live that you would sing on record but that Ed would sing live....

Watt: Sometimes he'd like to sing them live, y'know. One of them was really hard for me to play bass and sing - "What Gets Heard"...I stopped slappin' and stuff. That got real generic - everyone slappin' their bass.

PB: So there' s no slapping on the new record?

Watt: Well, a little one on "Song For Igor". Really intense song. It's one I showed George and Edward. But they didn't really like it. There's four songs out of the twenty that have no guitar. Which is very new to me. I've never written without guitars. One is just bass, viola and drums...one is bass, sax and drums...one is just bass, lead guitar and organ. It's different things that drive.

PB: That's cool. I mean, how do you move on unless you try something different?

Watt: Edward was a trumpet player, though. I wanted to try that with him, but I don't think he liked playing trumpet. I think he was maybe forced to play it. There's something about horns...the Minutemen would always have a couple jams every gig. Let a couple guys on for a minute and just wail. I like that idea. I wanted to take that further in a way...

PB: I know I'm going to get myself in trouble again, but is that sort of what "Mr . Robot's Holy Orders" is about? Not the words, but the music, the jam?

Watt: I would think in terms of gigs. I tell ya, records are new to me even though I've made a lot of them. They're more like documents of gigs, because I think of gigs, and we needed a song with a big jam in it. I know that sounds kinda vaudeville, but, I wrote one like that...I thought we needed it. I always made the set lists. I'd always think of the beginnings and endings of songs, more than the songs. That's a trippy thing - like *Double Nickels* - we had 45 songs and..what order do you put 'em in? What we did is each guy drew straws...picked a song each. So George picks all his songs for his side (laughs)...it's just funny ..that way we made sure all the good ones were on the wouldn't want to be younger . I just like knowing what I know now - when I was younger I was an idiot...even though in youth everything was better...

PB: It's all different.

Watt: I'd like the wisdom. You go back because your body's stronger, you're younger and skinnier....

PB: Yeah....It's hard enough for me these days to stay awake during shows...and I'm only 27...

Watt: When I was 27 d. Boon got killed two days later...it was terrible. His thing is Thursday. That's when we finally got weekends off. We had to work weekends in the Minutemen. The Minutemen was an intense band. In a way making this record (*Ball-Hog or Tugboat?*) was kinda like that. It was really exciting to play with 57 side guys. I wanted to make something where people could come together and not have to make another fucking tribute record. People gettin' sick of that?

PB: Tributes? A little bit. I guess it depends, y'know, sometimes they get silly. I notice you've got "Max and Wells" on here. I remember that as a fIREHOSE tune from years ago...

Watt: I wrote it for this movie...Mark Lanagan....now J. Mascis...it's much different man. By making this record...it's not like a band. It' s like I can be a director. I've always thought of my songs as little plays, and I was the light man, this time I was like casting director. It's a trip. It's kinda how other people can make them talk different-through my weird ass songs. The other way...sometimes I would look over at Edward and think, "wow, he's gonna sing this song." I'm interested to see what he does. I hope he doesn't join somebody's band - I hope he has his own for a while - to check it out. I'm very curious...I owe him a lot. I owe Greg Ginn a lot for teaching me a lot about business. d. Boon...his mom for making me play bass. I owe a lot of people...To be in the position of making a wrestling record.

Unfortunately, Watt and I didn't get a chance to do a follow up on this interview and the new record before we had to go to press. In our next issue we'll have it, plus a complete Mike Watt discography . Also in Squealer #4 look for my interview with George Hurley.

Deneen Gannon: Cake Magazine's Demorama Editor - Queen of the shitpile.

Demotape reviews, a tough and tricky business. We've all heard tons of major label schlock. Now imagine peoples personal stuff. It can be, let's face it, much worse. Though the quality of all recordings has undoubtedly improved, there are still many marginal 4-tracks, live to cassette and drunken rant tapes being made every day. As far as I know, there is only one place that asks for these, listens to all submissions the writes about them. That's CAKE magazine's Demorama page. Deneen Gannon is its queen.

All right, so maybe not every demo is horrible. Deneen told me that there are indeed gems in every stinking pile. And when the good ones come through, they sound great. You can perhaps imagine the long wait then the joy. "Oh man, this is actually cool!" The tough part is not to be overly jaded when the good stuff does hit. The Demorama crew seems to know this, it's a requirement for the job. Patience and a good attitude are sought-after qualities. Also an ability to avoid excessive negativity and focus on fun and humor is essential to being a good critic in CAKE. Of course what's funny depends on what side of the joke you're on. Bands like "Juggie Jugular" or "Cosmic Soul" probably weren't laughing too hard at their reviews. But hey, bad reviews are part of an artists life. They're as common as bad music - can't be avoided. Besides, those two reviews had me in stitches.

Okay, here's what's good about Demorama.
First off, Demorama is often the first press a band gets - the cornerstone to many a press-kit. They listen to and review every tape so anyone working can get into print. What a swell thing. Then too, some folks don't realize that this page is read by A&R people from labels big and small. It's important for them to do this - they must keep their fingers on the pulse of the super underground scene. Often to these lumbering giants will contact the bands asking for more. This can be good for obvious reasons. But more often than not they'll contact you, get you all excited then get your tape and file it away. Probably the A&R person records their own band practice over your treasure. Oh well. Anyway Deneen says no one has yet been signed due to their demo reviews.

Also bands that score high can often find themselves in other Demorama activities. Perhaps the stupendous Demorama - live showcase show. There have been three in '94 and more to come in 1995 Deneen told me. Or you may even hear yourself on the radio. CAKE and REV 105 have combined forces for CAKE slices. Deneen and her man, Arcwelder's Scot McDonald, select favorite demos-cuts then play them on the air. Potentially very exciting. So for some new groups, Demorama means more than just a positive review. It can be a series of positive breaks.

Of course negative reviews do happen. Not every tape is good nor any reviewer infallible. That's pretty basic stuff. If your band gets panned, face it and move on. But alas, many sensitive artists need to vent their frustration after a bad review. Mean phone calls are left on Deneen's machine all the time, but she's developed a pretty thick skin. Probably the most common gripe about Deneen is that she doesn't appreciate a given genre. Deneen assured me that she listens to and loves most styles of music. Yes, even Ska and Pop Metal. Further, she tries to recruit reviewers with similar wide-ranging tastes. Oftentimes too if a band feels really slighted, she'll pass the tape to another reviewer for a second chance. Though the outcome is usually similar, it's a cool gesture.

Deneen (at the left) with her innocence still intact.

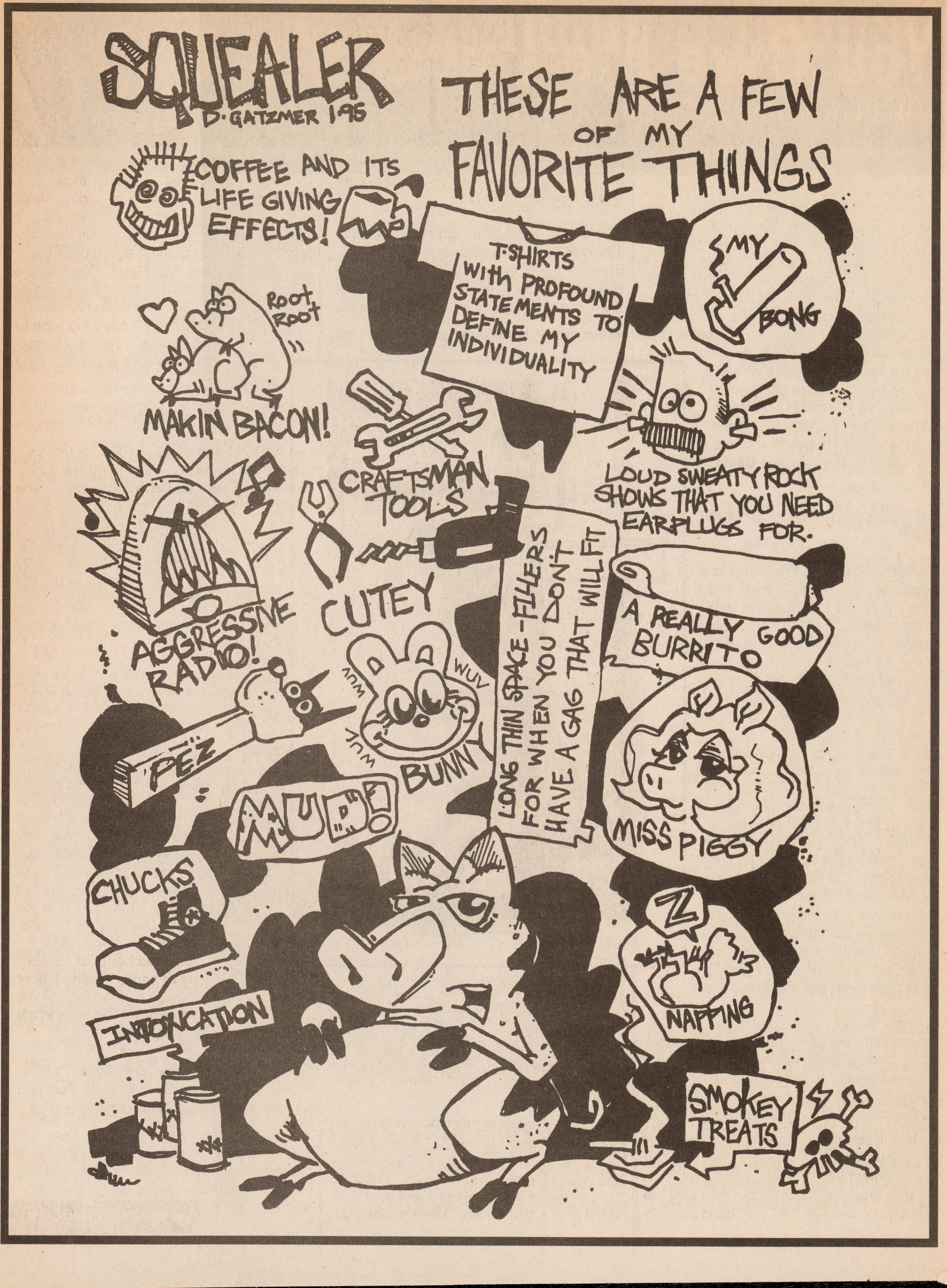
Deneen and CHANK!...Cake's Creative Director

THE STORY OF DENEEN AND CAKE

Not too long ago in early 1993, a freshly graduated Deneen chose to forgo law school to work and care for her ailing mother. She finished school in Mankato, took care of her mother in Rochester while living in Minneapolis. It was during this time that the seemingly tireless Deneen picked up a copy of CAKE. It spoke to her my friends - she loved it.

Not one to mess around she went straight to the CAKE offices. Surprised it wasn't a gleaming office-block, Deneen hung around outside publisher Bill Hamann's swanky bachelor pad / office. Once she saw him open the CAKE mailbox, she moved. She wanted to work for CAKE, she would stuff envelopes, lick stamps, listen to demo-tapes, whatever. Not missing an opportunity to work in a hokey spiel, Bill told her she'd have to start at the bottom. Dues had to be paid. She'd have to start on the demo page. Deneen happily accepted her post. Since then she's met tons of bands, made lots of new pals and has turned her section into the most consistent and possibly well-read in the paper. Man, what a lovely tale.

Since then things have calmed down a bit in Deneen's life. She now lives in St. Paul and plans to write demo reviews happily ever after.


SQUEALER
D. GATZMER 1-95
THESE ARE A FEW OF MY FAVORITE THINGS
COFFEE AND ITS LIFE GIVING EFFECTS!
T-SHIRTS WITH PROFOUND STATEMENTS TO DEFINE MY INDIVIDUALITY
MY BONG
Root Root
MAKIN BACON!
CRAFTSMAN TOOLS
LOUD SWEATY ROCK SHOWS THAT YOU NEED EARPLUGS FOR.
AGGRESSIVE RADIO!
CUTEY
WUV
WUV
WUV
BUNNY
LONG THIN SPACE-FILLERS FOR WHEN YOU DON'T HAVE A GAG THAT WILL FIT
A REALLY GOOD BURRITO
PEZ
MUD!
MISS PIGGY
CHUCKS
Z
NAPPING
INTOXICATION
SMOKEY TREATS

You Owe Me Liquor Money

by Hank Horman

Time for Horman to ramble again, for both plebians and elitist bastards to enjoy. I was going to inundate you with top ten lists for 1994 and whatnot, but you're probably going to see your share of those and they'll talk about how magnificent Courtney Love, Michael Stipe and Bob Mould are. Maybe if M. Stipe didn't change t-shirts so much or shave his head, I'd be more apt to join in on his devout following. But as it is, the guy's a pretentious geek who still hits on campus boys and girls in Athens, so I'll refrain. If I hear "What's The Frequency Kenneth?" one more time I'm gonna show up at the next R.E.M. gig with a Baseball bat.

IMPRESSIONS OF A BYGONE YEAR

BARBEQUES - These things are awesome. We all know that - every time I'm at one I think of the Rick Nelson classic "Garden Party." It's a symbol of American leisure at it' s finest. As I sit here, only two days removed from Christmas, it seems like only yesterday when we were all sitting around the yard on lawn-chairs and a picnic table. Under a comforting sun we swapped stories and waxed nostalgic about The Stooges and The MC5. Smokin' Joe Ruiz, an expert at discovering new ways in which to be the center of attention, bought a steak so large that it took up the space of an entire hibachi grill. The vegetarians among us recoiled in horror - they didn't want any of that disgusting dead cow residue polluting their garden burgers. And who can blame 'em. When we eat meat we are getting more than meat and it is pretty scary.

Anyhow like any good diplomatic human assemblage we gave the vegetarians honorary first grilling privileges. Jim young stunned everyone present when he produced from his billfold a half-dozen WWF trading cards. They featured such stars as Jimmy Hart (A.K.A. "The Mouth of the South") and Kamala The Ugandan giant. The back of each card listed trivial information about the wrestling celebrity pictured on the front. The back of Kamala's card read - "hobbies: eating live chickens, participating in tribal ceremonies..." Gee, you don't think that pro wrestling plays up racial stereotyping do you?

This thought immediately connected us to another, greater idea. That is, what if Kamala the Ugandan Giant showed up at our cookout. Like say he called up on the phone and said "Hank baby... I lost my directions for your place. Would you mind laying 'em on me again?" "Shit no prob Kamala... you take 94-East into the heart of St. Paul proper... and leave those chicken trucks alone 'cause we got plenty of poultry over here, home slice."

Anyways, think of this. If you could throw a grilling party with your pals (and the beauty of it is you can), and invite any three guests from world history (which you may or may not be able to do depending on your connections, selection of guests or paranormal capabilities). My own first impulse is to say Kamala (that's a given), MC5 singer Rob They circa 1968 with giant afro, and Jimmy "Mouth of the South" Hart. He could entertain the guests by jumping around in 360-degree patterns, screaming obscenities through his megaphone.

The highlight at the real barbeque, which was good enough without the celebrity choices, was when John Kass pointed out the badminton racket that was lodged between two telephone wires way above our heads. How the hell did that get there? Another highlight came when my grousing middle-aged white male next-door neighbor asked us to turn the music down. I thought everybody liked the coasters, but I guess not. If you have any loud music/ angry neighbor stories or cookout anecdotes to share please write in c/o The Squealer. I'll put them in my column, because god knows I need help writing the goddamn thing.

BEST BUY MEGASTORE, AND EVIL CORPORATE MEGA-STUFF IN GENERAL

Yikes! I recently attended the grand opening of a Best Buy megastore in Richfield. Or was it Edina? Or Eden Prairie?

The whole experience was like an Orwellian nightmare rather than the intended shopper's paradise. I dunno, maybe I've read too many disturbing books, but I began flashing on this horrific vision of the future where everyone's brain was fed by electronic wires offering a steady diet of "entertaining options." I especially liked the cacphonous symphony of overlapping noises - from overhead music, futuristic Nintendo sounds, "Will Bob Turner please report to isle #8" p.a. announcements every thirty seconds, people sampling stereo speakers.

Now I'll make my own little disclaimer/admission of consumer-dupe hypocracy here. I'm one of those guys who visits Best Buy on a regular basis, as I buy CD' s and calculate how much money I've saved afterwards. Although I'm just as likely to do this at

Garage D'or or Oarfolk, I'm not about to argue with getting a Marty Robbins or a Stevie Wonder CD for $8. It's too bad to see the Mom & Pop falling by the wayside, especially since they're located in the cities rather than generic suburban strip malls . But those who live on fair to middling wages really don't fell there's much choice.

Back to griping, though. I also heard a Best Buy manager raving about a new complex back east. "You can eat at this restaurant and listen to CDs on headphones at the same time!" The theory, of course, is that you can shop and eat at the same time! I too am impressed. I mean, in this country we have progressed so much and move so rapidly that we can do two things at once. Not content with this, pretty soon we'll be doing five or six things at once, like a modern day version of a one-man band.

HIGHEST RECOMMENDATIONS: HORMAN RENEGES ON TOP 10 BOYCOTT

1. BEASTIE BOY'S: "Ill Communication"
Artists of the year in my little world. The day it came out my bro put on a pot of coffee while I raced to the record store to get it. Pleasantly hot june afternoon - sun was beatin down on our baseball hats. We guffawed at the cover photo, read the titles of al 20 pieces of musical chaos, and went through all necessary mental preparations. Even a few calisthenics. "Sure Shot" kicked i t off, and it was the shit. Party jam of the year . When Mike D. yelled "I got mad hits like I was Rod Carew," we compared goosebumps. Immediate flashbacks to Bat DAy at Met stadium, 1978 when Sir Rodney was chasing .400 and the White Sox had their hind ends handed to 'em by the Twins, 29-12. It was a fierce slugfest. A lot like "Ill Communication." Elsewhere on the disk you'll find sultry summer percussion/keyboard jams, B-Boys makin' it with the Freak Freak, Bodhisattva vibes, and MCA's lambasting of the worlds evildoers on "The Update."
On stage they're even better - pogoing, hifiving, and holding their caps tight to their heads as if the shit' s so intense they might explode. In a sense they do.

2. ASS PONYS: "Electric Rock Music"

The band most deserving of its new-found success is Bethel Ohio's Ass Ponys. The released their third great album (first on on a major), And they're getting more and more lyrically twisted and melodic. Singer Chuck Cleaver tells riveting stories of small town losers, murderers, UFO landings and grandmothers. Cleaver's falsetto sweetens the words so as to of fset their off-color nature. Guitarist John Erhardt uses wa-wa, pedal steel and straight ahead rock style to create a beautiful, lingering effect. On their last two albums, death was a reoccurring theme and "Place Out There" and "Lake Brenda" continue the tradition. "Little bastard" is the first pop song I know of with a retarded boy as its protagonist. "Ape Hanger" is a motorcycle death song. "Peanut '93" documents Little Bastard's adolescence. "Blushing Bride" builds an unnerving tension and then spills it all out in shards of electric rock guitar. What' s most amazing is how pretty these songs sound. That's largely due to the literary and cinematic imagery strewn throughout, as weird characters meet strange fates in outdoor settings. The band turns tragedy into comic absurdity and vice versa.

SAMPLE LYRICS FOR THE KIDS

They say that she burst into flames
Late one afternoon
While sitting in her favorite chair
Alone up in her room
They say that what was left of her
Could fit into a spoon

3. THE BEST OF GEORGE JONES VOLUME ONE: HARDCORE HONKY TONK

My obligatory not-released-in-1994 recommendation. Mercury put it out in '92. When you're dealing with George, you want to make sure your getting the right stuf f. He often released cruddy material, but from 1955-62 he was king and that's what this collection covers. This is classic country of the booze and regrets variety, and very heartfelt at that. Jones is quoted in the liner notes as saying, "If you love it like I love it when your onstage or recording, you put yourself in these stories. If it ain't but three minutes you live it."
Lonnie Mack says it best though - "If George Jones ain't a soul singer I'll kiss your ass."

4. ANTONIO CARLOS JOBIM: Verve "Jazzmasters 13"

A wondrous, comprehensive collection of the Brazilian jazz wizards work spanning three decades. This is lush, sensual music with soft vocals and bossanova beats. Most importantly, it'll make winter go buy like the blink of an eye. It's definitely going on at the next cookout to.

5. VELVET CRUSH: "Teenage Symphonies To God"

Fans of Matthew Sweet and retro power pop...dig in.

6. SUGAR: "File Under Easy Listening"

The band's most recent First Avenue shows were lacking in emotional turbulence. That's okay, they probably spent it all on this disc. Nice and noisy for the most part, but the last two songs are quieter and also have the most staying power.

7. ALEX CHILTON: "Cliches"

Whereby our cult hero tackles schmaltzy jazz torch songs armed with an acoustic guitar . Sure they're all covers but he adorns them with the uncluttered simple sound of just his voice and his guitar. It all adds up to warm and charming grace.

8. TED HAWKINS: "The Next Hundred Years"

Ted's seen his share of pain. He sings the hell out of these songs, and removes any doubt immediately. Gospel soul in an Otis Redding/homeless drifter style

9. WEEN: "Chocolate and Cheese"

Don't hate them because they're goofballs.

continued on page 22

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Lecompton Prairie Village Lawrence Eudora

by Curt Flowers

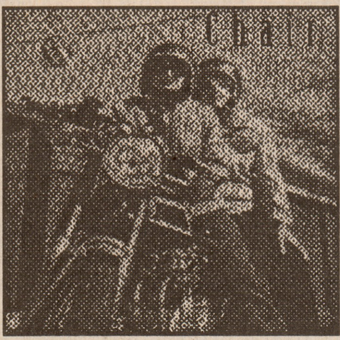
Lawrence, Kansas is a town with what could be understated as having it' s fair share of bands. Gotta be a hundred of 'em, maybe a million. Studio time is seemingly fairly priced at around 35 bucks an hour, plus tape. The money can get you Robert Reboth at Mercy Studios who records bands demos like tomorrow's D-Day. He also recorded Mercy Records latest release, *Loaded in Lawrence...Again*, recorded live at the Bottleneck. Roughly the same amount of money can get you time with EJ Rose at Red House Recordings. Rose is super-cool and knows all the right buttons to push and knobs to twist. Even shitty heavy-metal bands from Topeka come out smelling like springtime under his guidance. He has worked with Paw, Stick, William S. Burroughs and Kurt Cobain, Ministry, Kill Creek, S1ackjaw, Butterglory and loads more. To say he knows what he's doing just barely does him justice. If there is a "next Seattle," this town isn't it. Thankfully not a bunch of bands have the same tastes, styles and influences. At least not ones that stay around for more than six months. Allegedly an agreement was come to where I would run through bands that have earned an amount of attention for themselves and therefore, when there's more than one, the town. Paw is the band that signed the first and largest deal that drew anybody's attention this way. They practiced all the fucking time, deservedly got great opening spots (including Nirvana just before their asking price went up times 10), recorded a hot demo with Doug Olson at Smart Studios in Madison and kicked ass at the SXSW festival in Austin, Tejas in '92. Together for only about a year before they chose A&M over a mass of others, their quickly found attention caused a rash of jealousy that still have some that must consider themselves equally worthy though for some reason just uh gee, unlucky? kicking the dirt. They released *Dragline*, and toured like fucking fiends, visiting Europe three times, and crossing the states five. They now have a new bass player John, whose last name it would help to know but I don't though he previously played in Horse. A recent live show here with the Reverend Horton Heat and Tenderloin was 45 minutes of new and tough. Work on a follow-up is pending. They also released two 7" singles from the demos cut at Smart on their Nasty Pope label, which went pretty fast. From *Dragline*, the singles "Jessie" and "Couldn't Know" received decent amounts of MTV time, and guitarist Grant Fitch and singer Mark Hennessy guested on Riki Rachtmann's *Head Banger's Ball*. Locally, a video was made for the song "Hard Pig" by Tim Manning and uh...me and made the cable station. One reason I hope they hit it big is it'd be fun to get some dough for it someday. The other reasons being that I like them quite a bit. Next in terms of attention getters would be Stick, who signed with Arista and released the full-length *Heavy Bag*. The band has played together for several years formerly as Kill Whitey with Kim Czarnopys on vocals. Czarnopys is currently playing guitar and singing with Amputatoe, a band there is a good chance you will be hearing more of. Kill Whitey released a CD as import only on a German label and another, *Legacy* was released by Pig Dog Records out of Lawrence post-humously. Stick toured in support of *Heavy Bag*, and the single *"No Groovy"* was given a video counterpart that received airplay on MTV as well. They toured though probably not as much as they would've liked, and are also currently preparing for their second long-player. As of today I think that's the only major airplay though William S. Burroughs pops-up with some frequency. Ministry shot their video for "Just One Fix" here with him, and also featured a couple of local boys starring as junkies. Burroughs, noted most as an esteemed writer.of the Beat Generation along with others such as Jack Keruoac and Allen Ginsberg, has released records collaborating with the Disposable Heroes of Hiphoprisy for *Spare Ass Annie* on Island Records and with Kurt Cobain on an odd 10"-single "The Priest They Called Him" b/w "Silent Night." Lately he's been seen on television ads for Nike shoes. Zoom *was* a band that was starting to make a name for itself. In '91 they put out a six-song demo. "Dead End Story" and "Our Ladies Pride" were the college radio station K~HK's hits. My friend worked there and said both those songs got played plenty. Next came a 7" and CD on Lotus Pool, another local label. They toured and were heard by Greg Sage of W ipers fame. He hooked them up with Tim/Kerr records out of Portland, Oregon and the full-length *Helium Octipede* came out last spring. They played a few dates, started to draw crowds in Chicago and Milwaukee and then all of the sudden all bets were of f and they're no longer a band. Jeremy Sidener, former bass player of the band hooked up with friend Brandon Aikin's band Panel Donor . Their self-titled CD was released in October, also on the Lotus Pool label. Means to an End have the freshest Lawrence band label deal. After speculation and innuendo, the band's full-lenght will be out on the Mechanic label Feb. 21.

Local-shakers abound. Carrie Jo grew up in Massachusettes and moved to Lawrence at some three years ago at the age of 19. She puts out a fanzine called Ugga Bugga and recently added label responsibilities to her schedule. Her Average Day Productions put out it's first re1ease, a 7" by the local three-chord punktpop trio the Bubble Boys. If you're a fan of the sound you should make a cheap investment. People go ape shit for these guys. Also in the works is a full-length CD from the band Danger Bob. Dos Cojones is a guitar and drum duo that used to live in Lawrence, but now hone their sound in Nashiville, TN. Chuck Mead plays guitar and used to front the Homestead Grays, one of the bigger bands around these parts a few years back. Hestrums and sings while Shaw Wilson lends his considerable talents on lthe drums. 3/4 of L7 caught their act at Tootsie's in Nashville and invited the boys to play with them the next night, which they obligingly did. They also made a quick 575 bucks by reeling off a patron request to play any Hank Williams Sr. songs they knew at $25 a pop. They busted out ~7 of 'em before he ran out of money and they gave him a freebie. They've recorded a tape at the Castle in Nashville and are looking at the appropriate avenues for having it available to the record buying public. Buttterglory release records on the venerable, North Carolina label Merge. Originally from California, the husband and wife duo of Matt Suggs and Debbie Vanderwall moved to Lawrence and recruit crackerjack players including Craig Comstock (Black Calvin) and John Harrison (the What Gives)to accompany them live. Picture perfect sonic pop and always a good live show as players switch instruments often. *Crumble* is their full-length and was released October 3rd.

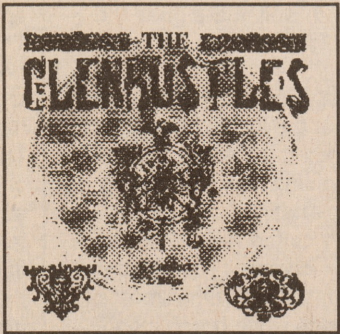
Kill Creek is a dual-guitar , four-piece that play pop songs doused in an attack reeking of kerosene. *Stretch* is the five-song EP released on the Mammoth label. People literally went insane over this CD and the follow-up full-length, *St. Valentine's Garage*. These records are on so many people's "Top 10" lists for '94, you'd think they were huge, fucking, millionaire rockstars. They toured a few time zones other than central standard, and are now working on their next record with drummer number 400. Five seconds of self-promotion: the band I play in is a three-piece called Priss. Together for four years. After the type of legal hassles that I'll bet not even the goddamn Beatles went through, our 10" tangerine colored vinyl record hits the streets March 23 on the Basura label out of the City of Angels. A CD with four extra songs follows shortly thereafter. Cover art by the super-cool Dame Darcy who now calls Brooklyn home. If you want to know about more bands, just ask.

Music Critic? Me? by Dave Riggs

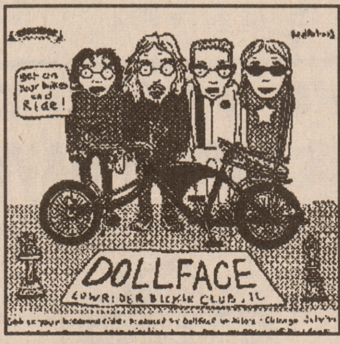
No need to ask me twice - I was out the door with a stack of 45's, visions of industry parties already dancing in my brain (an arm draped across Tori Amos' shoulders as I expound my views on the image of the cornflake in popular music, making an occasional emphatic gesture with my glass of champagne. "John Lennon could be found sitting on one, Paul Simon wanted to be one - but you Tori, you never were a cornflake girl were you?") Not to mention visions of royalties from the publication of collections of my reviews (it works for Pauline Kael).



Back in my apartment I dug out everything I needed: A touch of nostalgia for Husker Du and The Replacements (those were the days weren't they?), a half dozen references to indie bands that may or may not have existed. A few bizarre marriages of groups that would substitute for explanations (Mott The Hoople meets Nine Inch Nails with more than a hint of Gilbert & Sullivan). And in case of emergency, I got out my Alex Chilton action figure - you never know when your going to need one. I also dug my record player out of the closet and plugged it into my guitar amp - which shows how often I listen to records (and which might explain the fairly uniformly crappy sound quality - but somehow I doubt it).



It was exciting having no idea what I was about to hear. The sense of anticipation reminded me of the way Christmas used to be before socks and underwear became acceptable presents. For the most part I was disappointed. I kept my hopes up. Who knew what gems might be lurking around thge next phrase or buried under a pile of discordant harmony . Its not that these songs and bands were all terrible, more like just pretty average. I suppose since most bands start out crappy , average is just a phase they have to work through on their way to good.



Striving for objectivity (and putting off having to write this review) I let some time pass before listening to each song again. The order I took them in the second time around will give some clue to preferences (I needed something to look forward to.) I'm not interested in finding clever ways to slag on anybody so I'll pretty much just reproduce here my notes on the second round.

STONE GOD: Shoot The Sky / Me

With most bands you can judge them for what they are or for what they're trying to be. With these guys, I was a little scared that that might turn out to be the same thing.

CHAIR: AM Radio / Epitome

Great packaging. Harkens back to the Grand Ol Opry, Johnny Cash and Hank W illiams but falls a bit short of a tribute. Each song has a line ("I don't care and "I just don't give a damn") a less sympathetic reviewer might use as the cornerstone of the review.

FAT TUESDAY: "Clouds"

It was a bit of a disadvantage here since I've actually heard this one live. (I didn't care for it or them much at the time) It's a fairly engaging piece of fluf f - nothing against fluff it just doesn't hang together as well as the stuf f you clean out of a lint trap. Cool kazoo on the other side of the record.

DOLL FACE: "Get on your bikes and ride"

Still fluffy but the first real energy I've heard. They would probably be fun to see live - Paul Revere and the Raiders meet the Ramones (Finally got to use one!) Good harmonies, musicianship and it sounded good even through the amp. But not something I'm liable to come back to time and again.

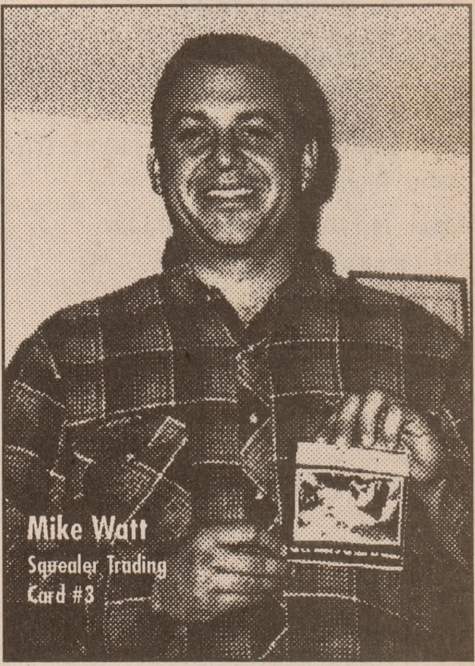
THE GLENRUSTLES: Comfort / Ragu

Comfort: Cool song, tight band. I've heard they're cool. I think maybe I'll go see them. Ragu: Gross another slacker anthem (note boredom and pop culture references) abruptly change mind and resolve to scrutinize set list before paying cover charge.

LILY LIVER: Queen of the Ball / Movie Star

This is what I was hoping I'd strike more of. Fresh original music that sounds like the people making it actually care. I could actually imagine myself having a conversation with the band members about their music. Missy's and Paul's voices work well in harmony (although they could be tighter.) Even though the songs seemed a bit repetitive, they were the only ones that ever resurfaced

continued on page 23



Mike Watt
Squealer Trading Card #3

Deneen Gannon
Squealer Trading Card #4

continued from page 22

10. BUILT TO SPILL: " There's Nothing Wrong With Love"

Somewhere about halfway through the classic Minutemen album profound big man D. Boon says, "This is scientist rock." Twin Falls Idaho native Doug Martsch gas got a geetar and a laboratory. This disc is an experiment which demonstrates how different chemicals work together - some agree with each other, some make fizzy sounds, some are potent hallucinogens, and some make big messy explosions. My theory is that D. Boon is a prophet. Also Flaming Lips fans will like Built To Spill if they don't already.

Squealer Trading Card #3

Mike Watt

Age: 37
Sign: Sagittarius
Home Town: San Pedro, CA.
Claim To Fame: Bassist from the Minutemen, fIREHOSE, DOS.
Other Projects: w/Sonic Youth on EVOL and Ciccone Youth, Crimony, w/Elliot Sharp and George Hurley,the film I, Fidel.

Squealer Trading Card #4

Deneen Gannon

Age: 29
Sign: Cancer
Home Town: Chicago
Claim To Fame: Demorama Editor for Cake Magazine.
Sample Review:

JUGGIE JUGULAR: Jiggle Them Jugs.
The first solo project from a guy named Juggie. It's real basic stuff: Juggie foolin' around with a guitar, the keyboard, and vocals. Real basic stuff. Real basic. Did I say basic? Most of it is bad to low-average, but the song "Long Gone" sparked my interest enough to listen to it twice. Other than that, however, I can't detect any signs of serious talent – or seriousness – on this demo. The hand drawn, jiggling "jugs" on the cover made me laugh though.

Quote: "Folks, don't let your meat loaf."

Here Comes The Neighborhood

by Frank Candor

Now I've seen it all. Is it not enough that we have starving children in our world? Is it not enough that our planet is virtually self-distructing and there was no World Series this year? The nightmare of America, especially Suburbia, USA, has finally come to pass: the noisy Sunday worshiper. None of my friends have ever called the cops complaining about a church.

I've played in a lot of rock bands on and off over the last eighteen years, and to a point I can see the nature of the situation. I have experienced thundering bassists, the sloppiest drummers, raging guitarists, and feedback powerful enough to rattle cadavers from crypts. I have never, until this point, ever heard of complaints over a fucking church choir. At 3 A.M., the rumble of a St. Paul heavy-metal cover band can be a bit of an annoyance, but at noon on a Sunday, how can the soulful sound of gospel music be a nuisance? Perhaps, if the neighboring populace, who were apparently in desperate need of a hobby, needed a reason for calling the cops, it was because the music from the church made it difficult to watch the Kenneth Copeland ministries. Either that or they resented the fact that the people who were raising a joyful noise were different from themselves.

We must realize that this was a congregation comprised primarily of African-American people. The church is located in a mostly white neighborhood. This was a congregation of spiritual people who feared God. The community surrounding the church feared the congregation. A community of xenophobes. A community of upper-middle class, media manipulated white folks who just wanted to be left alone. Then the new congregation moved in and, well, there goes the neighborhood...

I suppose it's not surprising that the local police station used to receive calls complaining about the odors emanating from the bakery/coffee shop down on the corner. I mean, considering the fact that most of these white-bread mush-heads chose a lifestyle and a set of values based on what everyone else was doing, who's to say that if one pillar of the community decided to raise a stink, they all just might go along for the ride. Besides, it'll give us something to do on those lonely nights when Matlock is pre-empted.

Local officials are handling the situation and are acting very diplomatically. Private donations have been made to provide air conditioning and sound-proofing in the sanctuary. This will all be resolved by some compromising on both sides, but I still don't understand why this is even an issue. St. Francis must be spinning in his grave.

I was driving through the neighborhood one day and I saw something that required a closer look. I pulled over and parked and approached the scene. Three people, all apparently from that area, were standing on the sidewalk near a rusty, old '71 Monte Carlo. They were stroking their chins and frowning and just struggling like hell with the task of finding the owner of this eyesore and having them ex-communicated from the neighborhood. I was wearing some pretty snazzy clothes that day and I was driving my girlfriend's car and I'm white, so I took

continued next page

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continued from previous page

on the persona that I might be one of the anointed from their village. I asked them what they were doing and they explained that the owner of this car was obviously not from around here and what was a person like that doing here in the first place. I queried, "a person like what?" One of them replied, "Oh, you know. Someone who can't afford a civilized form of transportation and, therefore, just doesn't belong." Another said, "It's probably one of those gangs from the north side scouting for the next property they're going to rob." Welcome to the twentieth century.

America the beautiful. Land of the free. Home of the brave. Land of the double standard and home of the paranoid. Bastion of hatred among men and spectacle of stupidity. Outpost of hypocrisy and den of iniquity, America, why do you refuse to open your eyes? Can you not see the ways we destroy eachother's lives? Do you refuse to admit your own humanity? Is it your fault or my own or is it both? The uniqueness of America, I was told, was that you could have practically anything you wanted so long as you stayed within certain guidelines. What I wasn't told was that the guidelines could be changed at any time for whatever reason if someone was having too much fun.

CORRECTIONS:

From Issue #2 -

On the Harder/Fuller Video List : All Arcwelder videos and the Zuzu's Petals video, production by Wolfgang Productions. Post production by Harder/Fuller Films. Soul Asylum - Artificial Heart video co-produced with Dave Roth and Dave Pirner.

continued from page 21

in my head. I found myself singing "Movie Star" in the tub.

900 Lbs: "Boogieman/ Moodswing / DEA"

Wow first Boogiemen is so quick that for a second I think I 've got my record player on the wrong speed. I never cared for them live but I have to admit that they did what they did pretty well and this record captures it. By far the best sound of any of the singles.

And that's it. Not much to say about it either. I guess I'll leave the reviewing to those of you with an agenda and a lot more patience.

Oh, and give my best to Tori - won't you?

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